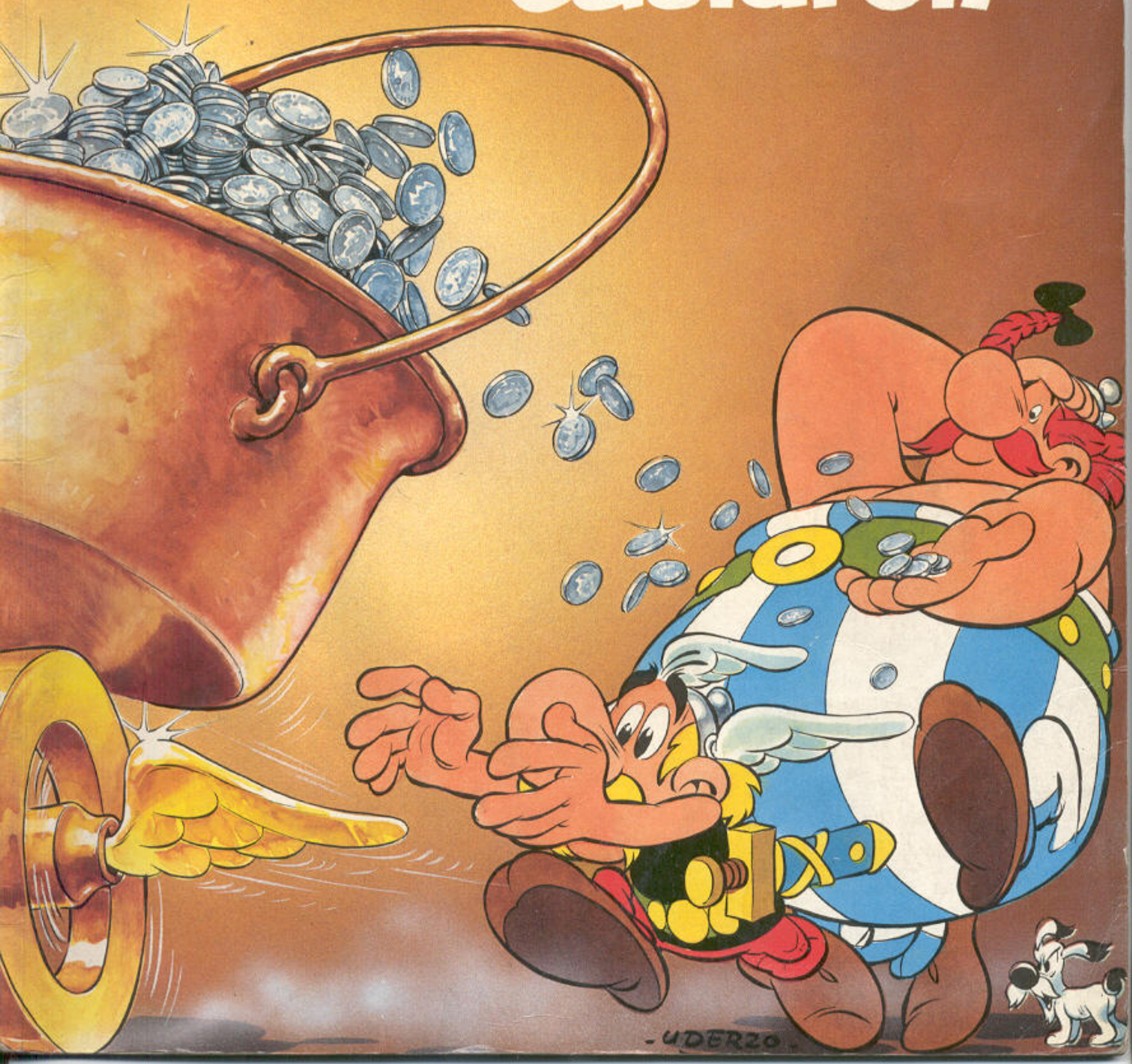
HODDER DARGAUD PRESENTS

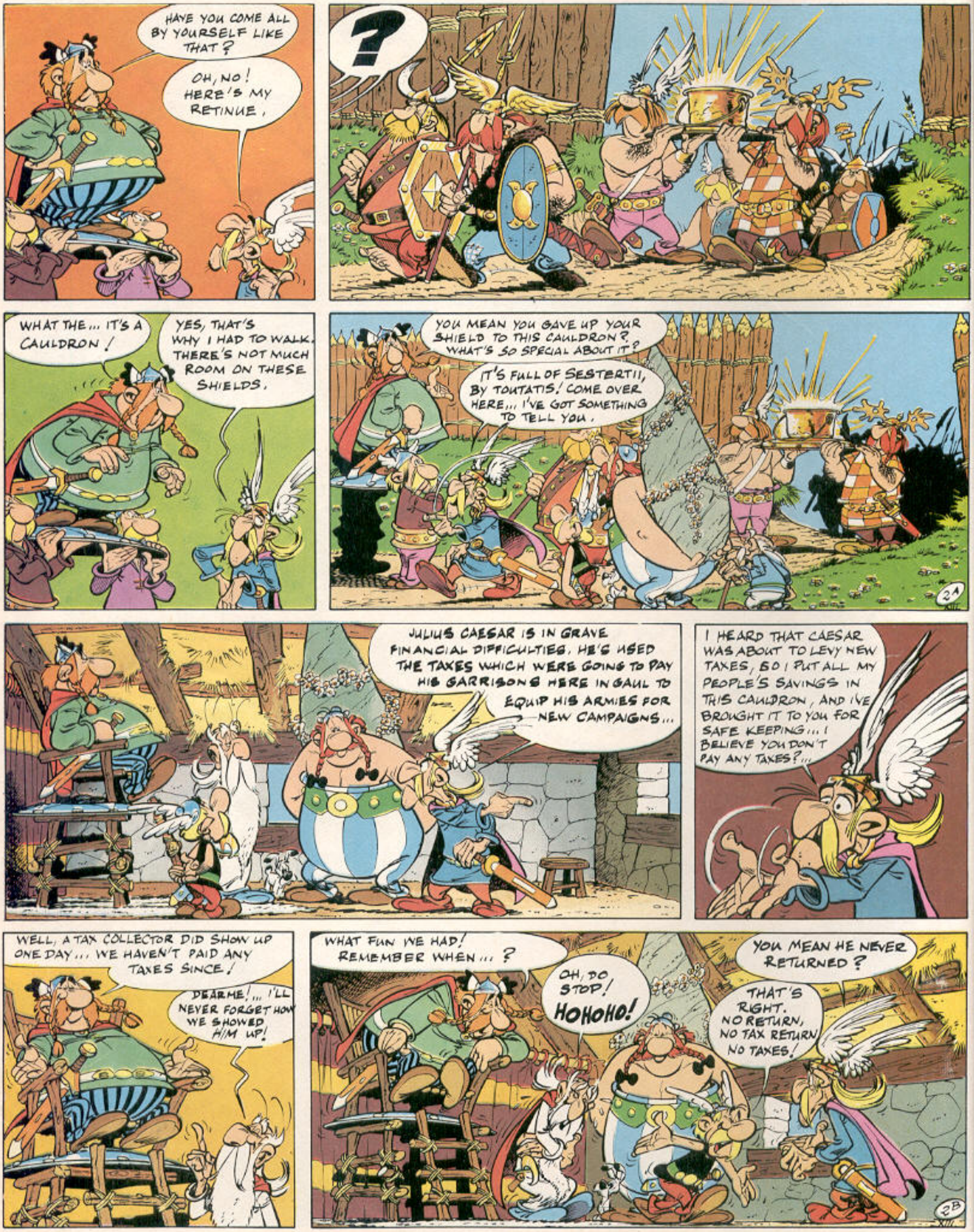
BOOK 17

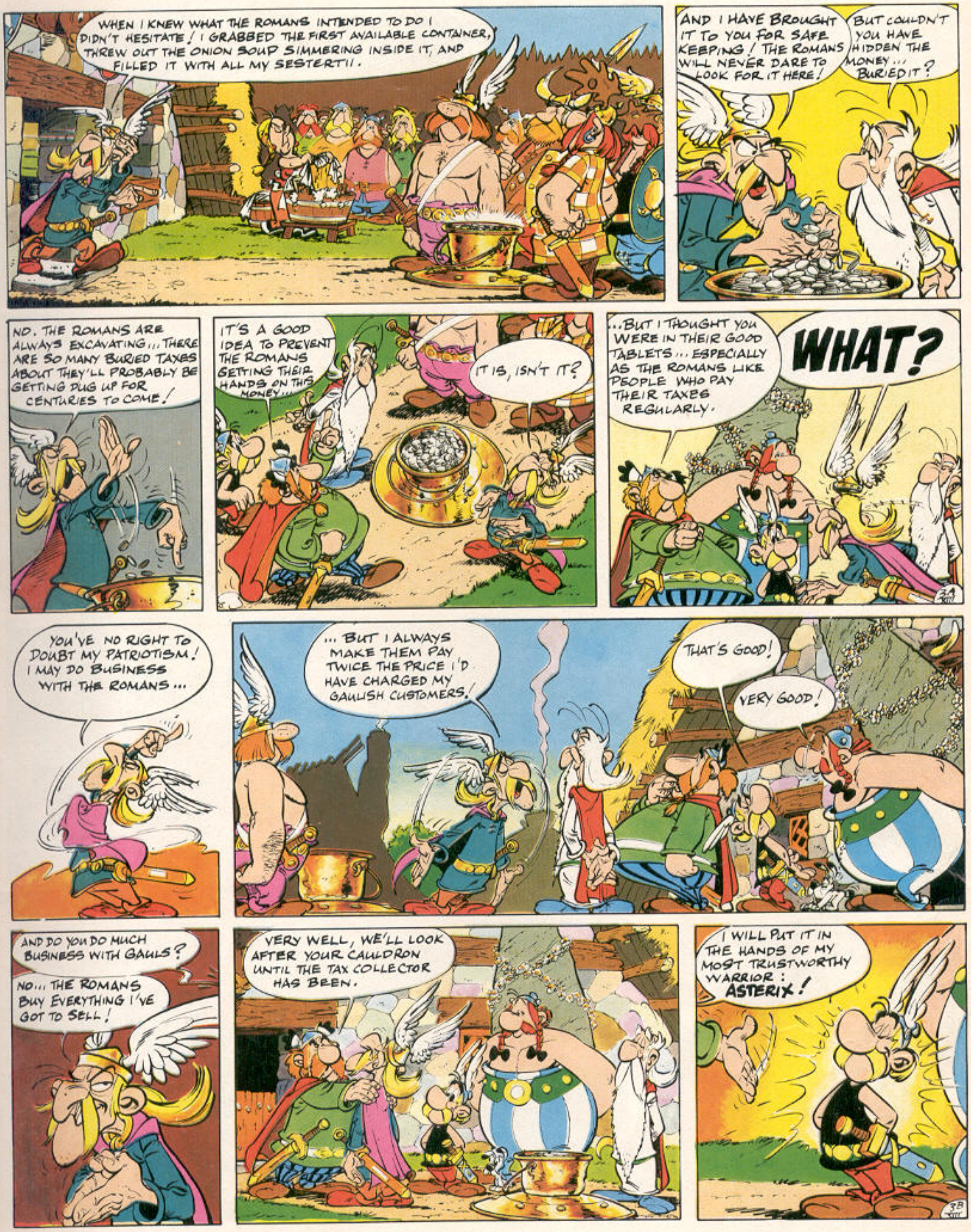
TEXT: GOSCINNY
DRAWINGS: UDERZO

Asterix and the cauldron




THE SPRINGTIME CALM OF THE LITTLE VILLAGE WE KNOW SO WELL IS INTERRUPTED BY THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF AN OFFICIAL VISIT...
ANY MORE SINGING AND YOU GET TAKEN APART! WITH GLEE!
IF YOU THINK I'D TAKE A PART IN ANY GLEE WITH YOU, FULLIAUTOMATIX...
CHIEF WHOSEMORALSARELASTIX AND HIS MEN ARE ON THEIR WAY!
STRAIGHT AWAY A COUNCIL MEETING IS CALLED.
WHO IS THIS CHIEF WHOSEMORALSARELASTIX?
HE'S THE CHIEF OF A VILLAGE ON THE CLIFF TOPS. I DON'T LIKE HIM MUCH; HE'S TIGHT-FISTED AND HE'LL DO ANY SORT OF DEAL WITH THE ROMANS FOR MONEY...
HOWEVER, HE IS A GAULISH CHIEF! WHEN ONE GAULISH CHIEF MEETS ANOTHER GAULISH CHIEF, PROTOCOL MUST BE OBSERVED! LET PREPARATIONS BE MADE TO WELCOME HIM!
SOON AFTERWARDS...
NOW THEN, BOYS! DECORUM, DIGNITY, NOBILITY!
HERE HE COMES, CHIEF!
WOTCHER, MATE! BIT WARM, EH? HOW ABOUT A JAR?
?!?!

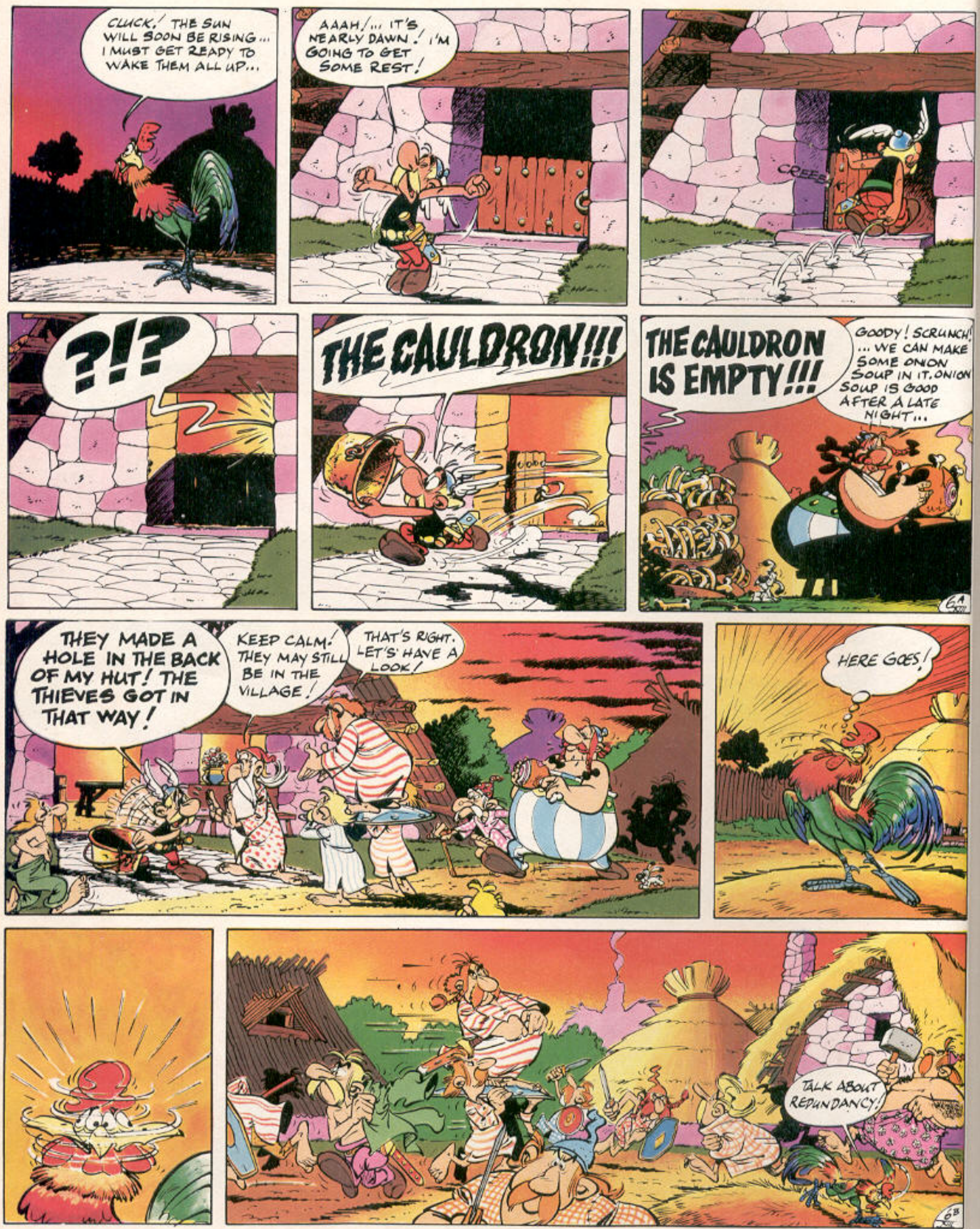

HAVE YOU COME ALL BY YOURSELF LIKE THAT?
OH, NO! HERE'S MY RETINUE.
?
WHAT THE... IT'S A CAULDRON!
YES, THAT'S WHY I HAD TO WALK. THERE'S NOT MUCH ROOM ON THESE SHIELDS.
YOU MEAN YOU GAVE UP YOUR SHIELD TO THIS CAULDRON? WHAT'S SO SPECIAL ABOUT IT?
IT'S FULL OF SESTERTII, BY TOUTATIS! COME OVER HERE... I'VE GOT SOMETHING TO TELL YOU.
JULIUS CAESAR IS IN GRAVE FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES. HE'S USED THE TAXES WHICH WERE GOING TO PAY HIS GARRISONS HERE IN GAUL TO EQUIP HIS ARMIES FOR NEW CAMPAIGNS...
I HEARD THAT CAESAR WAS ABOUT TO LEVY NEW TAXES, SO I PUT ALL MY PEOPLE'S SAVINGS IN THIS CAULDRON, AND I'VE BROUGHT IT TO YOU FOR SAFE KEEPING... I BELIEVE YOU DON'T PAY ANY TAXES?...
WELL, A TAX COLLECTOR DID SHOW UP ONE DAY... WE HAVEN'T PAID ANY TAXES SINCE!
DEAR ME!... I'LL NEVER FORGET HOW WE SHOWED HIM UP!
WHAT FUN WE HAD! REMEMBER WHEN...?
OH, DO STOP!
HOHOHO!
YOU MEAN HE NEVER RETURNED?
THAT'S RIGHT. NO RETURN, NO TAX RETURN, NO TAXES!


WHEN I KNEW WHAT THE ROMANS INTENDED TO DO I DIDN'T HESITATE! I GRABBED THE FIRST AVAILABLE CONTAINER, THREW OUT THE ONION SOUP SIMMERING INSIDE IT, AND FILLED IT WITH ALL MY SESTERTII.
AND I HAVE BROUGHT IT TO YOU FOR SAFE KEEPING! THE ROMANS WILL NEVER DARE TO LOOK FOR IT HERE!
BUT COULDN'T YOU HAVE HIDDEN THE MONEY... BURIED IT?
NO. THE ROMANS ARE ALWAYS EXCAVATING... THERE ARE SO MANY BURIED TAXES ABOUT THEY'LL PROBABLY BE GETTING DUG UP FOR CENTURIES TO COME!
IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO PREVENT THE ROMANS GETTING THEIR HANDS ON THIS MONEY...
IT IS, ISN'T IT?
...BUT I THOUGHT YOU WERE IN THEIR GOOD TABLETS... ESPECIALLY AS THE ROMANS LIKE PEOPLE WHO PAY THEIR TAXES REGULARLY.
WHAT?
YOU'VE NO RIGHT TO DOUBT MY PATRIOTISM! I MAY DO BUSINESS WITH THE ROMANS...
... BUT I ALWAYS MAKE THEM PAY TWICE THE PRICE I'D HAVE CHARGED MY GAULISH CUSTOMERS!
THAT'S GOOD!
VERY GOOD!
AND DO YOU DO MUCH BUSINESS WITH GAULS?
NO... THE ROMANS BUY EVERYTHING I'VE GOT TO SELL!
VERY WELL, WE'LL LOOK AFTER YOUR CAULDRON UNTIL THE TAX COLLECTOR HAS BEEN.
I WILL PUT IT IN THE HANDS OF MY MOST TRUSTWORTHY WARRIOR: ASTERIX!



I'M GOING TO PUT THE CAULDRON IN MY HUT.
HOW SILLY! FANCY THROWING OUT GOOD ONION SOUP TO MAKE ROOM FOR SESTERTII!
BUT OBELIX, WITH SESTERTII YOU CAN BUY ONION SOUP!
THAT'S THE POINT! WHY THROW OUT THE ONION SOUP WHEN IT WAS IN THE CAULDRON ALREADY?
I WILL STAND GUARD ALL NIGHT.
ER... THERE'S GOING TO BE A BANQUET FOR CHIEF WHOSEMORALSARELASTIX. I DON'T LIKE TO DEPRIVE DOGMATIX OF...
OFF YOU GO, OBELIX, OLD CHAP!
I'LL BRING YOU SOMETHING TO EAT!
WOOF! WOOF!
SOON AFTERWARDS...
YUM! SCRUNCH! GLOUP!
BY TOUTATIS! YOU EAT WELL!
EAT?... GLOUP!... EAT? I'D FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT ASTERIX! I MUST TAKE HIM SOMETHING TO EAT!
YOU JUST SIT STILL! I'LL SEE TO IT! I'VE GOT A BIT OF INFORMATION TO GIVE HIM.
YOU'RE WELCOME... SCRUNCH!... I HATE BREAKING OFF BETWEEN TWO... YUM!... BOARS!


HALT! WHO GOES THERE?
IT'S ONLY ME. GLAD TO SEE YOU'RE ON THE ALERT. I KNOW THE CAULDRON WILL BE SAFE WITH YOU.
I'M ONLY DOING MY DUTY.
YOU'LL BE MORE COMFORTABLE OVER HERE WHILE YOU EAT.
I WANTED TO WARN YOU THAT SOME ROMAN PATROLS SPOTTED US ON OUR WAY HERE.
SCRUNCH! SCRONCH!
YOU HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR! THE ROMANS WON'T GET THEIR HANDS ON YOUR SESTERTII. I SHALL BRING THEM BACK TO YOU MYSELF!
I FEEL MUCH EASIER IN MY MIND NOW!
CHEERIO, O VITALSTATISTIX! I'M COUNTING ON YOU!
OUR HONOUR IS THE GUARANTEE OF YOUR PEACE OF MIND!
EVERYONE HAS GONE TO BED... EVERYONE, THAT IS, EXCEPT OBELIX, WHO IS FINISHING OFF A FEW BOARS...
YUM! SCRUNCH! SCRONCH!
... AND ASTERIX, WHO IS STANDING GUARD.


CLUCK! THE SUN WILL SOON BE RISING... I MUST GET READY TO WAKE THEM ALL UP...
AAAH!... IT'S NEARLY DAWN! I'M GOING TO GET SOME REST!
CREEE
?!?
THE CAULDRON!!!
THE CAULDRON IS EMPTY!!!
GOODY! SCRUNCH! ... WE CAN MAKE SOME ONION SOUP IN IT. ONION SOUP IS GOOD AFTER A LATE NIGHT...
THEY MADE A HOLE IN THE BACK OF MY HUT! THE THIEVES GOT IN THAT WAY!
KEEP CALM! THEY MAY STILL BE IN THE VILLAGE!
THAT'S RIGHT. LET'S HAVE A LOOK!
HERE GOES!
TALK ABOUT REDUNDANCY!

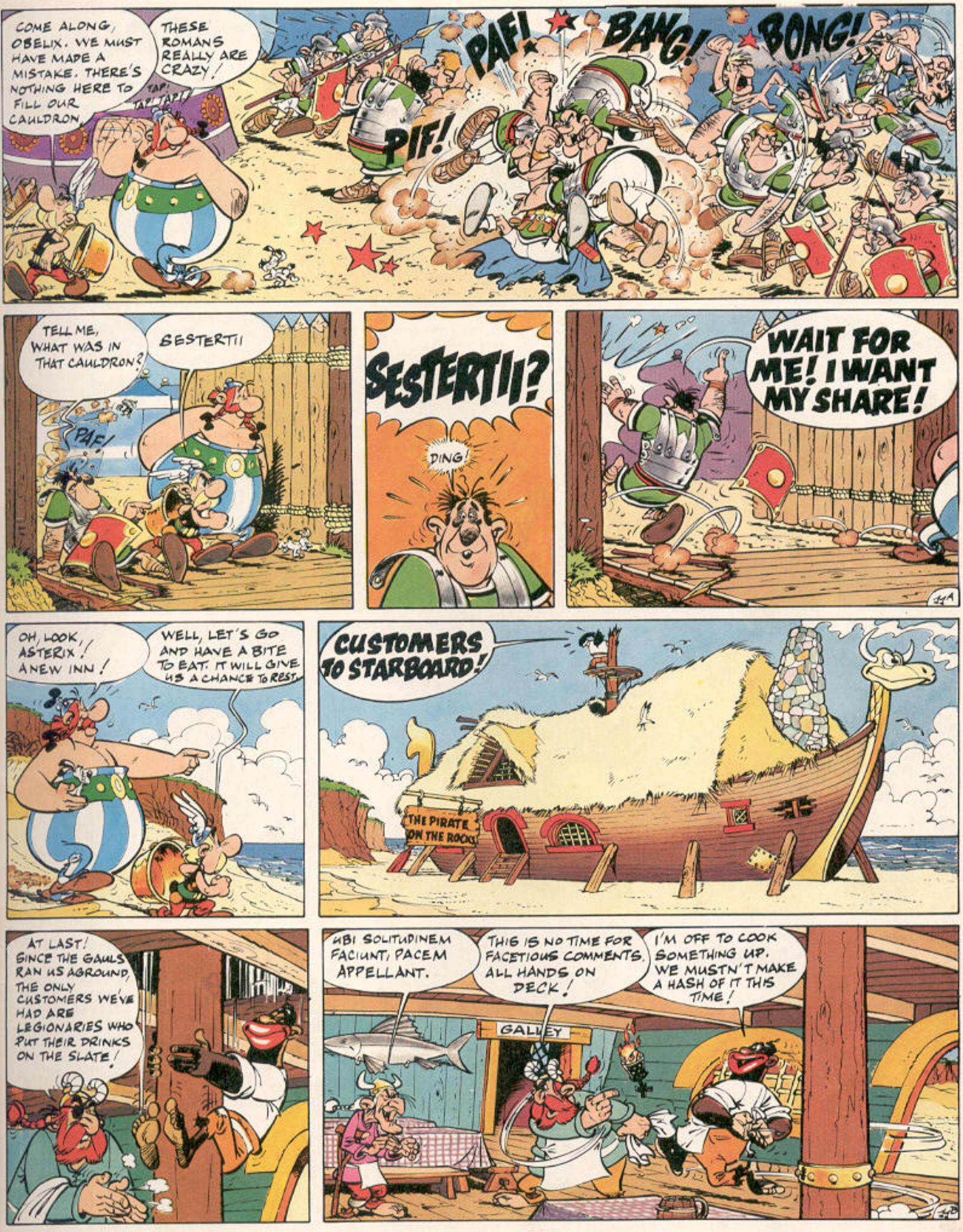

WE HAVE A DEBT OF HONOUR TO PAY, ASTERIX. CHIEF WHOSEMORALSARELASTIX ENTRUSTED A CAULDRON AND HIS SESTERTII TO US...
GIVE HIM BACK HIS CAULDRON! THAT WILL PAY OFF HALF THE DEBT, AND ...
SILENCE, OR I'LL HAVE THE VILLAGE CLEARED!!!
BANG! BANG! BANG!
IT WAS UP TO YOU TO LOOK AFTER THE CAULDRON, AND YOU FAILED IN YOUR DUTY. YOU HAVE BROUGHT DISHONOUR ON OUR VILLAGE. YOU KNOW HOW STRICT OUR LAWS ARE ...
SAD AS IT IS FOR US TO TAKE THIS STEP, YOU ARE BANISHED FROM THE VILLAGE. YOU MAY RETURN ONLY IF YOU MAKE UP FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE!
I SHALL RETURN WITH THE CAULDRON FULL OF SESTERTII, OR I SHALL NOT RETURN AT ALL!
WELL SPOKEN, BY TOUTATIS! COME BACK WITH YOUR CAULDRON OR IN YOUR CAULDRON!
YOU KNOW THE MAGIC POWERS OF THIS POTION. IT WILL GIVE YOU INVINCIBLE STRENGTH! NOW GO, MY BOY, AND USE IT WISELY!
THANKS, O DRUID!
PARP
ASTERIX IS LEAVING! WHERE'S HE GOING?!!
LET HIM BE, OBELIX. HE IS BANISHED, BUT PERHAPS HE WILL COME BACK SOME DAY.
ARE YOU ALL OFF YOUR HEADS? LETTING ASTERIX GO OFF LIKE THAT, ALL ALONE? HOW DO YOU EXPECT HIM TO GET BY IF DOGMATIX AND I AREN'T THERE TO ADVISE HIM?
TAP! TAP! TAP! TAP!


YOOHOO, ASTERIX! YOOHOO... WAIT FOR ME!
GO BACK TO THE VILLAGE, OBELIX. YOU MUSTN'T FOLLOW ME... I AM BANISHED.
BANISHED? WELL, WE'LL BE BANISHED TOGETHER!
OBELIX!
DID YOU REALLY THINK I WAS GOING TO LET YOU DO A BANISHING ACT ALL BY YOURSELF? WITHOUT DOGMATIX AND ME, YOU WOULDN'T BANISH VERY FAR!
!
BOOHOO! BOOHOO!
BOOHOOO! BOOHOO!
HOOOOOOW
NOW WE ARE TOGETHER I'M SURE WE'LL BE ABLE TO TAKE THE CAULDRON BACK FULL!
OF COURSE! WHERE CAN WE FIND SOME ONION SOUP TO PUT IN IT?
!
WE DON'T WANT ONION SOUP, WE WANT SESTERTII! MO-NEY!
YOU AND YOUR MONEY! YOU'RE GETTING ON MY NERVES!
WELL, I DIDN'T ASK YOU TO FOLLOW ME!
FORGIVE ME, OBELIX! I'M SO UPSET!
IT'S MY FAULT, ASTERIX. BUT DON'T YOU WORRY, WE'LL GET THAT CAULDRON FULL OF ANYTHING YOU LIKE! WE'RE SO CALM AND SENSIBLE WE CAN'T FAIL!
!
BOOHOOHOO! BOOHOOHOO!
HOOOOOOWL
TEEHEEHEE!
TAP! TAP! TAP!



SOON AFTERWARDS...
CHIEF WHOSEMORALSARELASTIX MENTIONED SOME ROMANS... PERHAPS THEY STOLE THE MONEY.
WE'RE NOT FAR FROM COMPENDIUM. LET'S GO AND ASK THEM...
THE ENTRANCE TO THE FORTIFIED ROMAN CAMP OF COMPENDIUM...
HALT! QUO VADIS? NO ENT...
SCHKONNNK!
WHERE'S THE INFORMATION BUREAU?
THAT MUST BE THEIR CENTURION'S TENT OVER THERE.
GAULS? WHO GAVE YOU PERMISSION TO ENTER OUR CAMP?
THE CAULDRON.
WHAT CAULDRON?
THIS CAULDRON! WE'VE COME TO FILL IT!
FILL IT? WHAT WITH?
I'M NOT TOO CLEAR MYSELF, BUT ASTERIX CAN EXPLAIN IT ALL.
TO FILL IT WITH MONEY. OUR MONEY! MONEY! DO YOU GET IT? THE MONEY! THE MONEY!
THE MONEY?
THE MONEY!
OUR PAY HAS ARRIVED!
AND NOT A MOMENT TOO SOON!
OUR MONEY! OUR MONEY!


???
THAT'S FUNNY. WHY WOULD THE GAULS BE PAYING US?
VAE VICTIS, AS THE MAN SAID, OLD BOY.
IN ORDER OF HEIGHT! LITTLE ONES FIRST! LITTLE ONES FIRST!
WHAT ON EARTH ARE THEY DOING? ARE THEY QUEUING UP TO GET BASHED NOW?
COME ON, START HANDING IT OUT!
I CAN?
HEY! DON'T PUSH BACK THERE, OR WE'LL ALL GET A HAND-OUT!
PAF!
STOP IT, OBELIX! WE'RE ONLY HERE FOR THE MONEY!
SO WHERE IS THIS MONEY? ON ITS WAY?
I HOPE SO! START HANDING OUT!
YOU MEAN WE HAVE TO PAY TO BE IN THE LEGIONS NOW?
JOIN UP, THEY SAID. IT'S A MAN'S LIFE, THEY SAID. NOT A WORD ABOUT PAYING FOR IT...
KEEP CALM! JUST KEEP CALM!
I WILL NOT KEEP CALM, BY JUPITER! I REFUSE TO PAY!
LET'S DO SOME COLLECTIVE BARGAINING. I PROPOSE WE SET UP A WORKING PARTY TO...
ARE YOU OFF YOUR HEAD?
WE OBJECT! WE SHALL TAKE MILITANT ACTION!
THIS WON'T DO!
WE MUST WARN OUR COMRADES AT TOTORUM, LAUDANUM AND AQUARIUM!
RAISE THE ALARM! CALL OUT THE GUARD!


COME ALONG, OBELIX. WE MUST HAVE MADE A MISTAKE. THERE'S NOTHING HERE TO FILL OUR CAULDRON.
THESE ROMANS REALLY ARE CRAZY!
TAP! TAP! TAP!
PAF!
BANG!
BONG!
PIF!
TELL ME, WHAT WAS IN THAT CAULDRON?
SESTERTII
PAF!
SESTERTII?
DING!
WAIT FOR ME! I WANT MY SHARE!
OH, LOOK, ASTERIX! A NEW INN!
WELL, LET'S GO AND HAVE A BITE TO EAT. IT WILL GIVE US A CHANCE TO REST.
CUSTOMERS TO STARBOARD!
THE PIRATE ON THE ROCKS
AT LAST! SINCE THE GAULS RAN US AGROUND, THE ONLY CUSTOMERS WE'VE HAD ARE LEGIONARIES WHO PUT THEIR DRINKS ON THE SLATE!
UBI SOLITUDINEM FACIUNT, PACEM APPELLANT.
THIS IS NO TIME FOR FACETIOUS COMMENTS. ALL HANDS ON DECK!
I'M OFF TO COOK SOMETHING UP. WE MUSTN'T MAKE A HASH OF IT THIS TIME!
GALLEY


COME IN, COME IN, GENTLEMEN!
ALLEY
DO THEY TAKE POT LUCK, OR ARE WE OFFERING THE GOURMET MENU ?
?!?
THE GAU... THE GAU...
RIGHT, THE GOURMET MENU!
THE GAULS! IT'S THE GAULS!
HERE'S THE ANSWER TO OUR PROBLEM! THEY CAME ASHORE TO STEAL THE MONEY!
WH... WHAT MONEY?
GLUG GLUG GLUG!
CRASH!
HEEEEELP!
SEARCH THE WHOLE PLACE!
OH, GOODY!
PAF!
I DON'T LIKE THEM SO MUCH NOW THEY'RE LANDLUBBERS. THEY SEEM OUT OF THEIR DEPTH HERE... ALL AT SEA...
BONG!
GO AND LOOK IN THE KITCHEN.
CRASH!
NOOO! THERE'S NOTHING IN HERE! ONLY CHESTNUT STUFFING FOR THE BOAR!



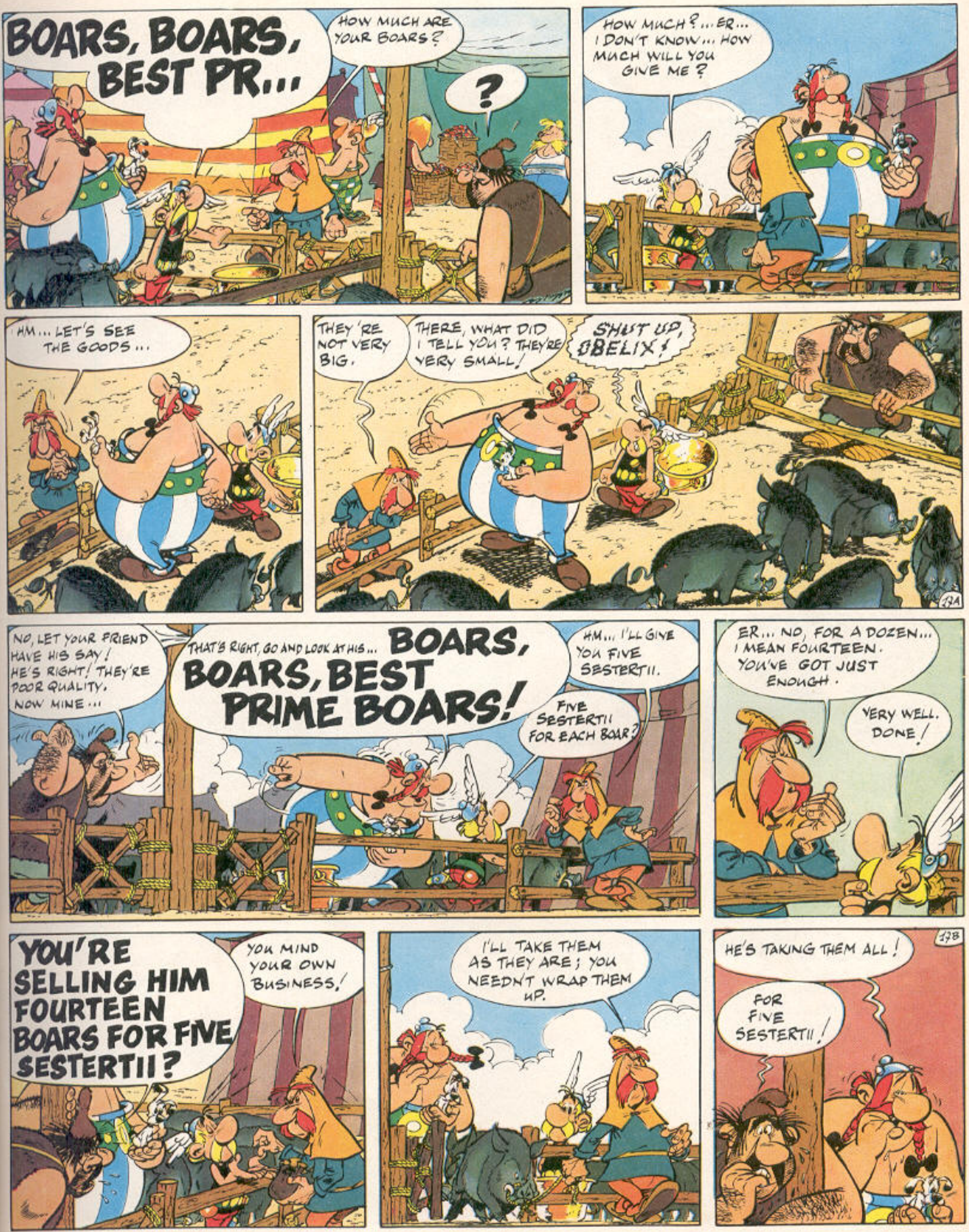
NO LUCK! WE DIDN'T EVEN GET A MEAL!
I NEVER DID FIND THAT BOAR, THE ONE THAT WAS GOING TO HAVE CHESTNUT STUFFING
OH, NUTS! IT ISN'T EVEN THE CHESTNUT SEASON...
?!?
I'VE BEEN ROBBED! I'M GOING BACK! OH, WHAT A BORE!
COME ON! YOU AND YOUR HOARY OLD CHESTNUTS...
WHICH MAY EVEN HAVE BEEN HORSE CHESTNUTS, SINCE THE PIRATES HAVE CONKED OUT...
TALK ABOUT HORSE-PLAY! THEY CAME, THEY SAW, THEY CONKERED...
GALLEY
LIFE ASHORE ISN'T ALL PLAIN SAILING... COME ON, LADS, LET'S GET BACK TO SEA!
I DON'T THINK WE'RE GOING TO FIND THE THIEVES. WE MUST THINK OF SOMETHING ELSE...
WE'LL HAVE TO EARN THE MONEY.
EARN MONEY? BUT WE'VE NEVER DONE A THING LIKE THAT!
WELL, WE MUST START... BUT HOW?
SUPPOSE WE TOLD PEOPLE THE STORY OF OUR ADVENTURES? THEY MIGHT PAY TO LISTEN!
I'M NOT MUCH OF A BUSINESSMAN, BUT I CAN TELL YOU THAT WOULDN'T MAKE ANY MONEY!
WE COULD CALL THEM "THE ADVENTURES OF OBELIX THE GAUL" AND...
OH, SHUT UP!


LET'S SEE, WHAT CAN WE DO?
I CAN DELIVER MENHIRS, TRAIN DOGS, HUNT BOAR, FISH, EAT, DRINK, DANCE, BASH THE ROMANS...
LOOK! ON THE ROAD!
WHO ARE YOU?
WE'RE MERCHANTS, WE'RE GOING TO SELL OUR PRODUCE AT THE MARKET IN CONDATUM.
AND YOU EARN MONEY THERE?
I WOULDN'T SAY THAT. WHAT WITH THE ECONOMIC CRISIS AND TODAY'S PRICES... WE JUST ABOUT MAKE ENDS MEET.
I MUST BE OFF IF I'M TO GET A GOOD PITCH. FORWARD MARCH, YOU LOT! I CAN SEE ONE WHO ISN'T IN GOOSE-STEP!
THAT'S THE WAY TO FILL THE CAULDRON! WE'LL SELL THINGS AT THE MARKET!
SELL WHAT THINGS?
BOARS! WE CAN HUNT BOARS AND THEN SELL THEM!
THAT REMINDS ME, WE HAVEN'T EATEN YET!

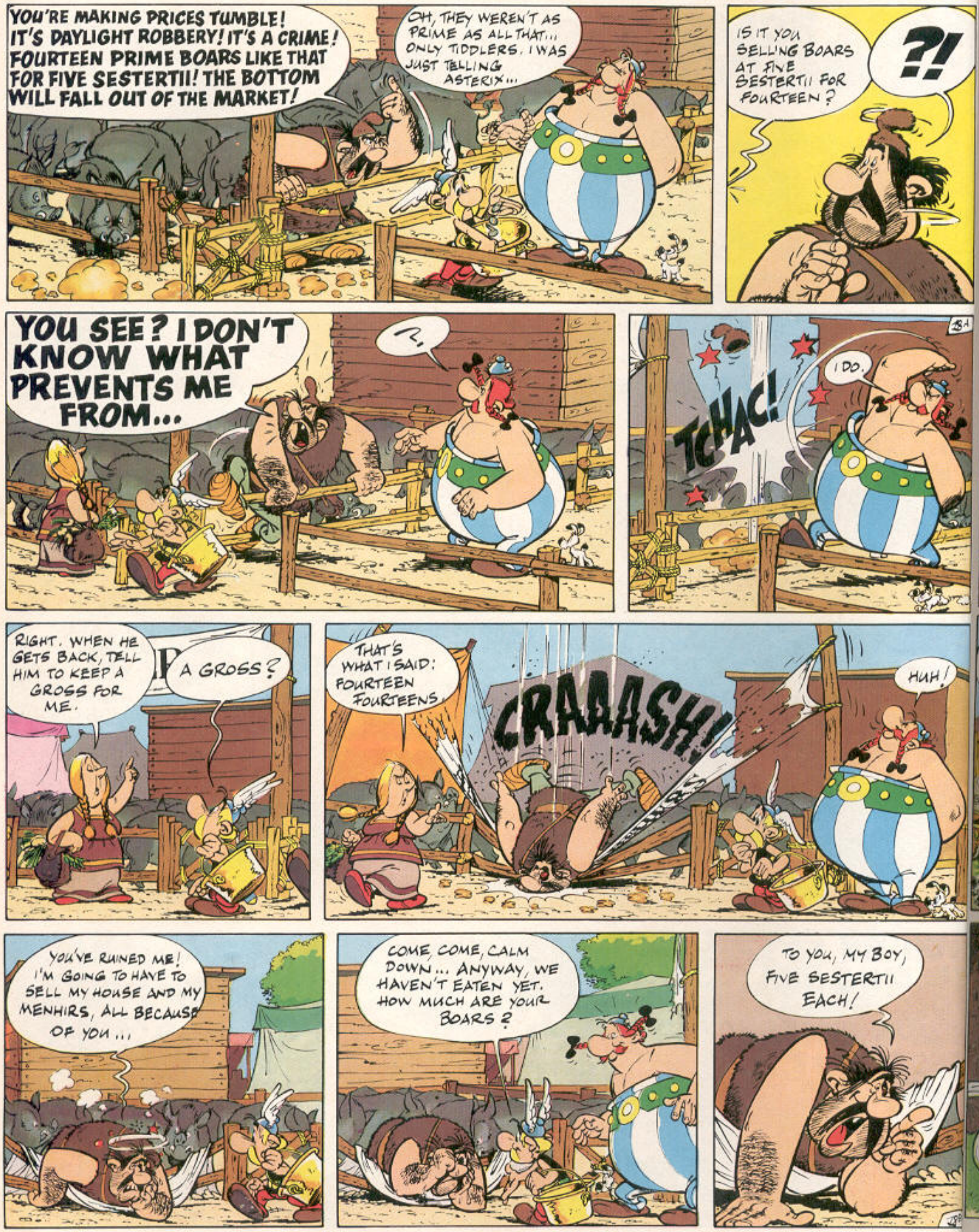

DOGMATIX AND I HAVE CAUGHT ANOTHER ONE, ASTERIX!
GOOD! THAT MAKES FOURTEEN; THAT'LL BE ENOUGH!
GRUNT!
RIGHT! SHALL WE EAT NOW?
NO! IF YOU EAT THEM WE WON'T HAVE ANYTHING LEFT TO SELL. ANYWAY, YOU ATE A FEW WHILE WE WERE HUNTING. I SAW YOU!
OFF WE GO!
THEY WERE ONLY LITTLE ONES!
IT MAKES ME QUITE ILL TO SEE ALL THAT FOOD IN FRONT OF ME. ARE YOU GOING TO MAKE THOSE POOR DUMB CREATURES WALK FAR?
TO CONDATUM MARKET. THEN WE'LL SELL THEM!
WOOF! WOOF!
THE GREAT MARKET AT CONDATUM...
A PRIZE EVERY TIME
THIS IS OFFAL!
PIGSKIDNIX
I'D LIKE A NICE LEG OF MUTTON FOR AN ORGY. THERE'LL BE FIFTEEN OF US!
SO WHERE'S THE LETTUCE I ORDERED YESTERDAY?
SOMEWHERE OVER THERE. IT BOLTED.
LETTUCE FRESH TODAY



ASTERIX, I'M HUNGRY!
WE MUST FIND A GOOD PITCH TO SELL OUR BOARS.
IF WE DON'T SELL THEM, DO WE EAT THEM?
WE-ARE-GOING-TO-SELL-THEM!
ANTIBIOTIX~BOARS
?!?
AH! HERE'S A FREE PITCH. LET'S GET OUR WARES INTO IT!
BOARS, BOARS, BEST PRIME BOARS!
YOU SEE? IT ISN'T DIFFICULT. IF WE JUST COPY HIM WE'LL SELL ALL OUR BOARS!
HUH!
BOARS, BOARS, BEST PRIME BOARS!
BOARS, BOARS, BEST PRIME BOARS
!!!
BOARS, BOARS, BEST PRIME BOOA--AARS!
?!
BOARS, BOARS, BEST PRIME BOOOOAAAARS!
BOARS, BOARS, BEST PRIME BOOOAAAARS!
BOARS, BOARS, BEST PRIME BOARS.
WHAT ARE THEY DOING TO THOSE BOARS? CUTTING THEIR THROATS?
NO, JUST SELLING THEM.



BOARS, BOARS, BEST PR...
HOW MUCH ARE YOUR BOARS?
?
HOW MUCH?... ER... I DON'T KNOW... HOW MUCH WILL YOU GIVE ME?
HM... LET'S SEE THE GOODS...
THEY'RE NOT VERY BIG.
THERE, WHAT DID I TELL YOU? THEY'RE VERY SMALL!
SHUT UP, OBELIX!
NO, LET YOUR FRIEND HAVE HIS SAY! HE'S RIGHT! THEY'RE POOR QUALITY. NOW MINE...
THAT'S RIGHT, GO AND LOOK AT HIS... BOARS, BOARS, BEST PRIME BOARS!
HM... I'LL GIVE YOU FIVE SESTERTII.
FIVE SESTERTII FOR EACH BOAR?
ER... NO, FOR A DOZEN... I MEAN FOURTEEN. YOU'VE GOT JUST ENOUGH.
VERY WELL. DONE!
YOU'RE SELLING HIM FOURTEEN BOARS FOR FIVE SESTERTII?
YOU MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS!
I'LL TAKE THEM AS THEY ARE; YOU NEEDN'T WRAP THEM UP.
HE'S TAKING THEM ALL!
FOR FIVE SESTERTII!



YOU'RE MAKING PRICES TUMBLE! IT'S DAYLIGHT ROBBERY! IT'S A CRIME! FOURTEEN PRIME BOARS LIKE THAT FOR FIVE SESTERTII! THE BOTTOM WILL FALL OUT OF THE MARKET!
OH, THEY WEREN'T AS PRIME AS ALL THAT... ONLY TIDDLERS. I WAS JUST TELLING ASTERIX...
IS IT YOU SELLING BOARS AT FIVE SESTERTII FOR FOURTEEN?
?!
YOU SEE? I DON'T KNOW WHAT PREVENTS ME FROM...
?
I DO.
TCHAC!
RIGHT. WHEN HE GETS BACK, TELL HIM TO KEEP A GROSS FOR ME.
A GROSS?
THAT'S WHAT I SAID: FOURTEEN FOURTEENS
CRAAASH!
HUH!
YOU'VE RUINED ME! I'M GOING TO HAVE TO SELL MY HOUSE AND MY MENHIRS, ALL BECAUSE OF YOU...
COME, COME, CALM DOWN... ANYWAY, WE HAVEN'T EATEN YET. HOW MUCH ARE YOUR BOARS?
TO YOU, MY BOY, FIVE SESTERTII EACH!



ASTERIX, I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND BUSINESS. WE HAD FOURTEEN BOARS, WE SOLD THEM, AND...
I KNOW, I KNOW...
I DON'T THINK WE'RE CUT OUT TO BE BUSINESSMEN... THE CAULDRON IS STILL AS EMPTY AS EVER, AND THE MAGIC POTION WON'T HELP US TO...
ENCORE! ENCORE!
?
BY THE RIGHT... QUICK MARCH!
CLAP! CLAP! CLAP! CLAP! CLAP! CLAP! CLAP!
ASTERIX, I'VE GOT IT! I'LL TELL YOU WHO'S GOING TO FILL OUR CAULDRON! DOGMATIX!
?!
I'LL TEACH HIM SOME TRICKS, AND PEOPLE WILL THROW US LOTS OF MONEY!
SIGH!
COME ALONG, DOGMATIX! BEG! LIKE THIS!
NOW, ON YOUR FRONT PAWS, LIKE THIS!
ROLL ALONG THE GROUND LIKE TH...
?
WOOF! WOOF! WOOF! WOOF! WOOFWOOF
HARF! HARF! HARF!
19



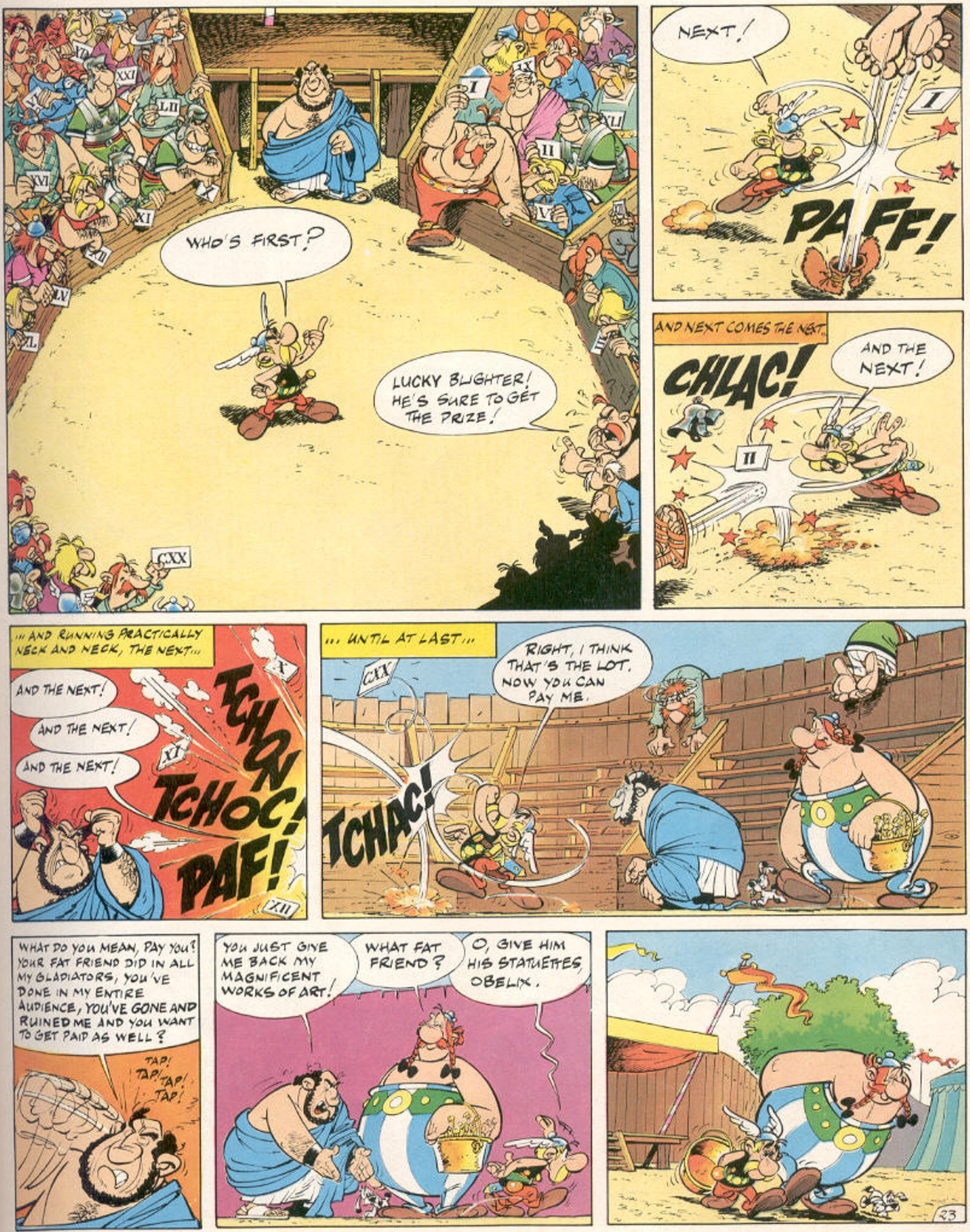
DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME. DOGMATIX WILL NEVER MAKE A PERFORMING DOG.
NOT A PERFORMING DOG? DOGMATIX? YOU JUST SEE WHAT I'VE TAUGHT HIM...
DOGMATIX! TWO AND TWO... HOW MANY?
WOOF! WOOF! WOOF!
THERE YOU ARE! YOU SEE?
MEANWHILE, NEARBY...
PALACE OF THE GLADIATORS
BOM! BOM!
A MAGNIFICENT PRIZE FOR ANYONE WHO CAN LAST A ROUND AGAINST ONE OF MY GLADIATORS!
ROLL UP, FRIENDS! WHO DARES TO FIGHT MY GLADIATORS? DON'T WORRY, IT'S NOT A FIGHT TO THE DEATH, BARRING ACCIDENTS! AND REMEMBER, A MAGNIFICENT PRIZE!
THAT'S THE WAY TO FILL THE CAULDRON!
NOW THAT IS AN IDEA! WHO'LL GO FIRST?
ME! ME! ME!
AT LAST, A GAUL WHO IS ONLY AFRAID OF ONE THING, THAT THE SKY MAY FALL ON HIS HEAD... WHICH MIGHT VERY WELL HAPPEN!
PALACE OF T
WELL, MY LAD, WHO'LL YOU HAVE FOR THE MASSACRE? THE VELITE, THE RETIARY, THE NUMIDIAN OR HIM OVER THERE WITH THE CESTUS?
ALL OF THEM, OF COURSE!
ACE OF T
HOHOHO!
THESE GAULS ARE CRAZY!
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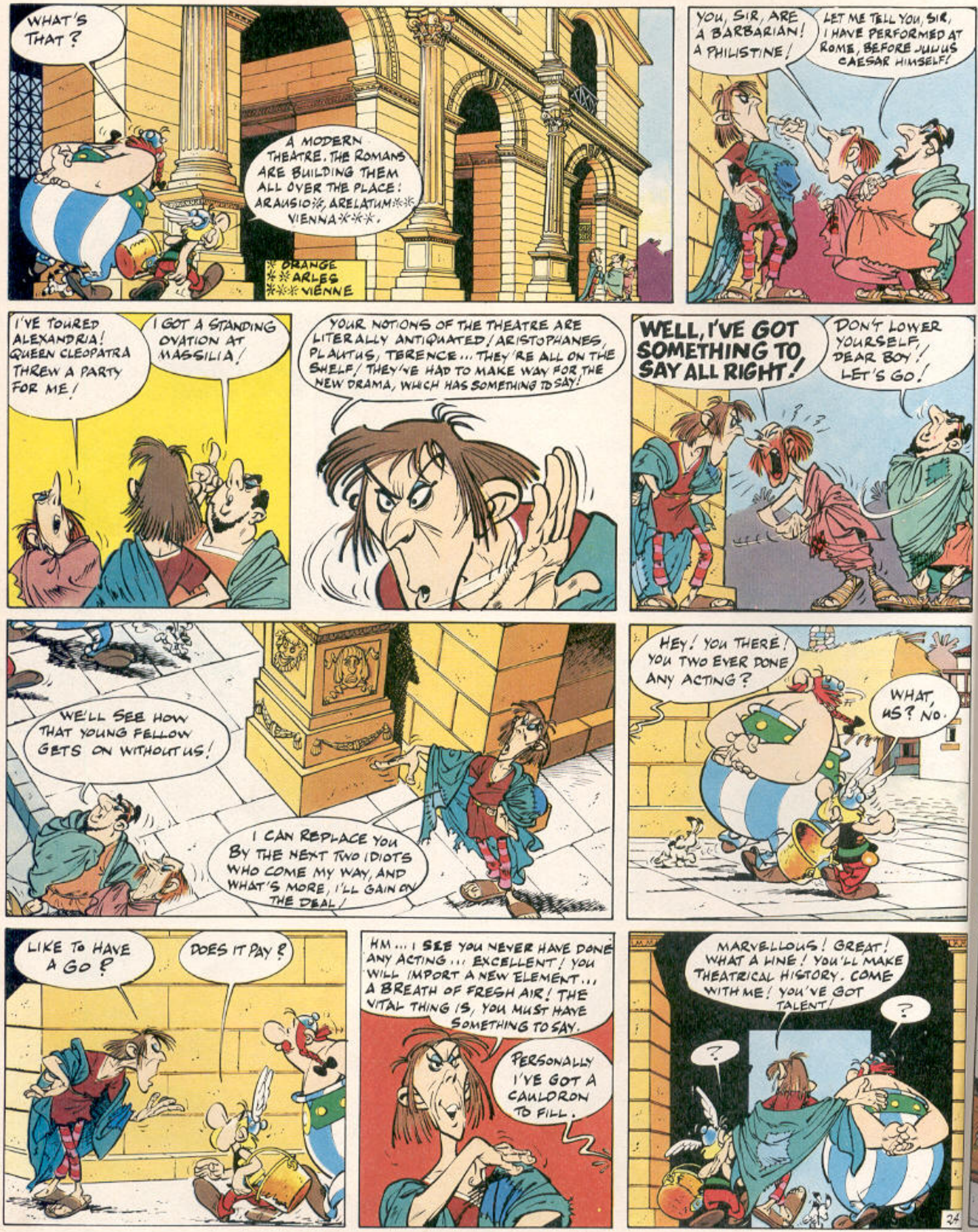


LADIES AND GENTLEMEN... GLADIATOR NUMBER ONE!
TANTARAAA!
TEEHEEHEE!
!?
DOIIIING!
ER... WELL DONE... BRAVO! WELL, YOUNG MAN, YOU'VE WON A MAGNIFICENT WORK OF ART WHICH...
NEXT! I'VE GOT A CAULDRON TO FILL!
TANTANTARAAA!
TCHRAC!
I WISH I'D GONE IN FOR PIRACY LIKE MY FIRST COUSIN... I MIGHT HAVE RISEN IN THE WORLD...
TANTARA!
CHLONK!
NEXT!
THIS IS A POOR SHOW...
SURE IS...
COME ON, LET'S GO.



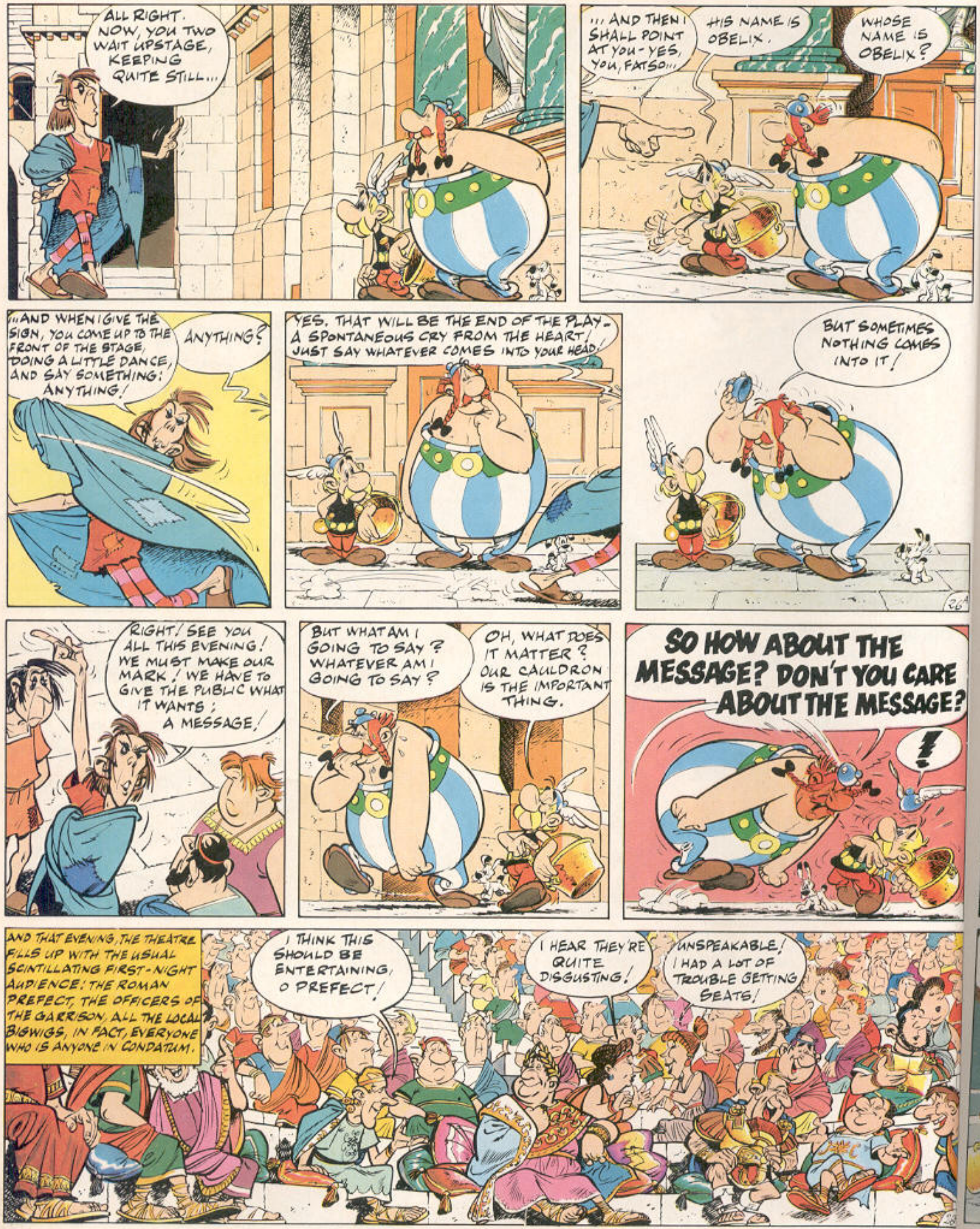
COME ON, NEXT! I HAVEN'T GOT ALL DAY!
THERE ISN'T ANY NEXT!
YOU'VE FINISHED OFF MY EIGHT GLADIATORS. WHAT'S MORE, THEY'VE JUST GIVEN IN THEIR NOTICE; THEY SAY THEY'D RATHER GO BACK AND FIGHT IN THE CIRCUS ...
... THE SAME OLD GRIND: AVE CAESAR, MORITURI TE SALUTANT, AND ALL THAT JAZZ.
YES, YES... NOW THEN, WHAT ABOUT THE MAGNIFICENT PRIZE, PLEASE?
!?
WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT CENTURIES FOR THIS LOT TO BE WORTH ANYTHING!
WAIT HERE. I'M GOING TO TRY AND GET SOME MONEY FOR THEM.
WE'RE CLOSED. I'VE RUN OUT OF GLADIATORS.
WHY NOT TAKE ME ON? I'VE GOT A CAULDRON TO FILL.
THIS MUST BE SOME NEW FAD!
ALL RIGHT! DONE! THE PUBLIC WILL ENJOY SEEING A LITTLE TITCH LIKE YOU BEATEN UP!
SOON AFTERWARDS...
A MAGNIFICENT PRIZE FOR ANYONE WHO CAN LAST A ROUND WITH THIS YELLOW-WHISKERED MIDGET OF UNCERTAIN AGE!!!
ME!
ME!
I SAW HIM FIRST!
THERE WON'T BE ENOUGH TO GO ROUND!
LET ME HAVE A GO!

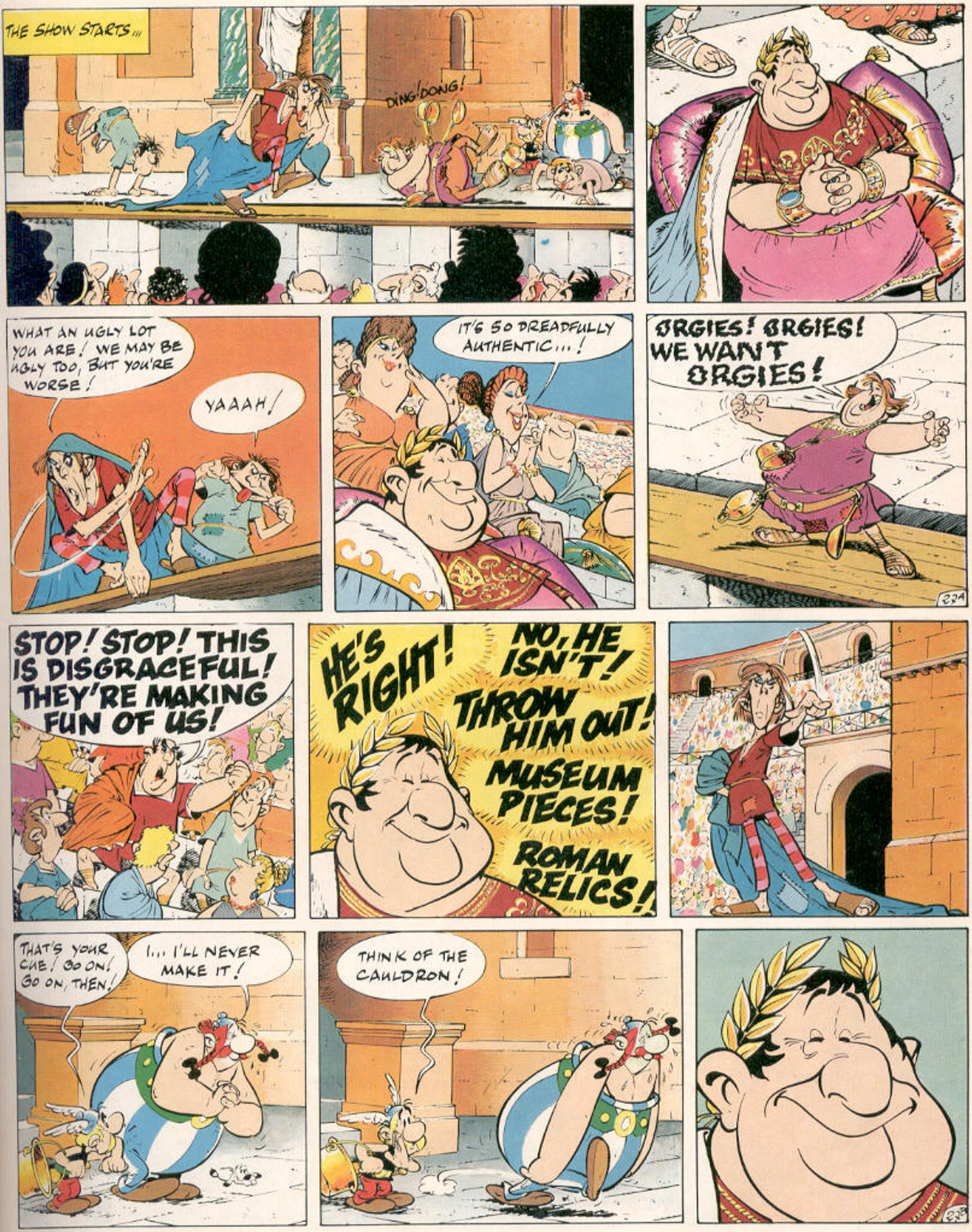

WHO'S FIRST?
LUCKY BLIGHTER! HE'S SURE TO GET THE PRIZE!
NEXT!
PAFF!
AND NEXT COMES THE NEXT.
CHLAC!
AND THE NEXT!
...AND RUNNING PRACTICALLY NECK AND NECK, THE NEXT...
AND THE NEXT!
AND THE NEXT!
AND THE NEXT!
TCHON
TCHOC!
PAF!
... UNTIL AT LAST...
RIGHT, I THINK THAT'S THE LOT. NOW YOU CAN PAY ME.
TCHAC!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, PAY YOU? YOUR FAT FRIEND DID IN ALL MY GLADIATORS, YOU'VE DONE IN MY ENTIRE AUDIENCE, YOU'VE GONE AND RUINED ME AND YOU WANT TO GET PAID AS WELL?
TAP! TAP! TAP! TAP!
YOU JUST GIVE ME BACK MY MAGNIFICENT WORKS OF ART!
WHAT FAT FRIEND?
O, GIVE HIM HIS STATUETTES, OBELIX.
23

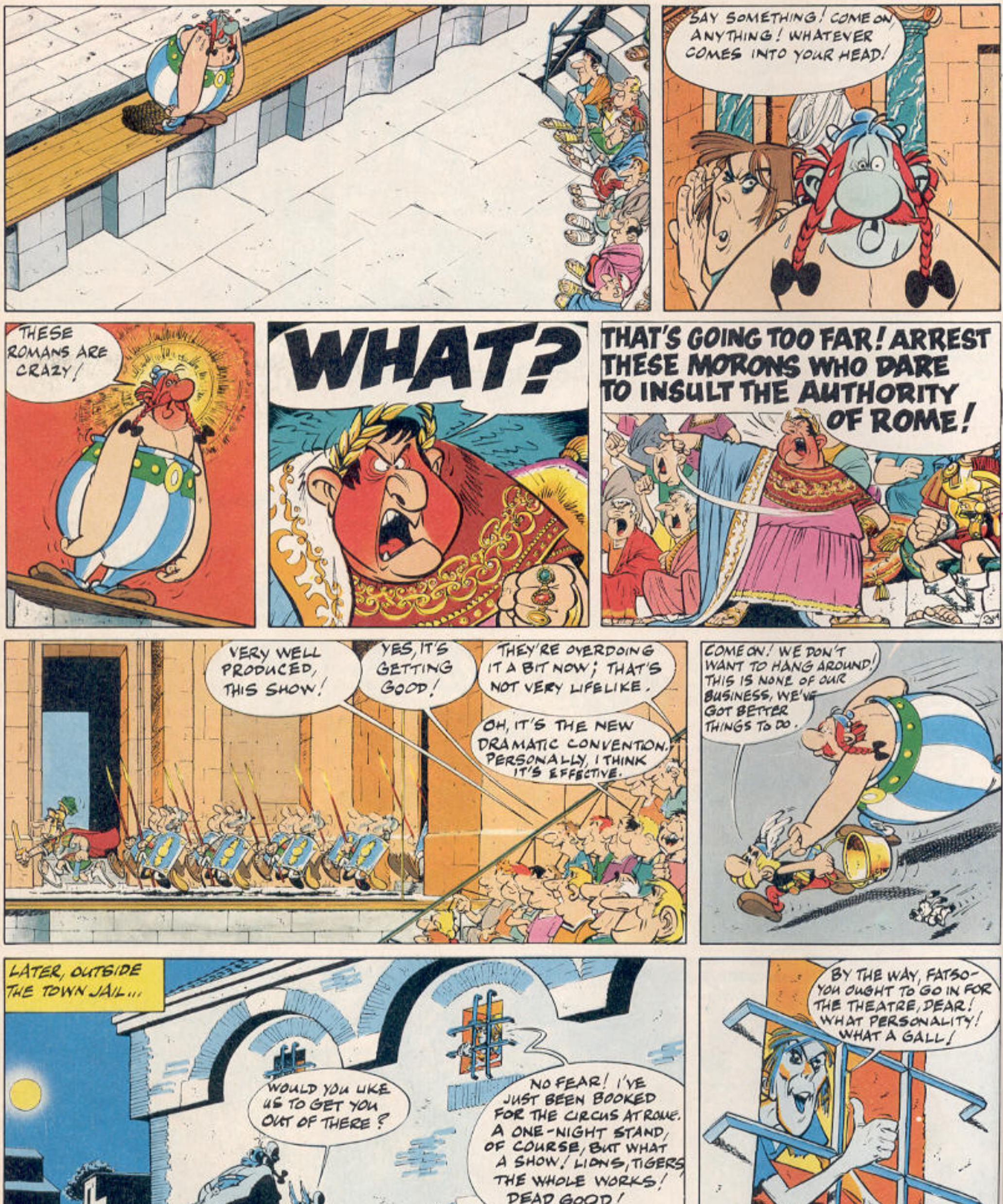


WHAT'S THAT?
A MODERN THEATRE. THE ROMANS ARE BUILDING THEM ALL OVER THE PLACE: ARAUSIO*, ARELATUM**, VIENNA***.
* ORANGE ** ARLES *** VIENNE
YOU, SIR, ARE A BARBARIAN! A PHILISTINE!
LET ME TELL YOU, SIR, I HAVE PERFORMED AT ROME, BEFORE JULIUS CAESAR HIMSELF!
I'VE TOURED ALEXANDRIA! QUEEN CLEOPATRA THREW A PARTY FOR ME!
I GOT A STANDING OVATION AT MASSILIA!
YOUR NOTIONS OF THE THEATRE ARE LITERALLY ANTIQUATED! ARISTOPHANES, PLAUTUS, TERENCE... THEY'RE ALL ON THE SHELF! THEY'VE HAD TO MAKE WAY FOR THE NEW DRAMA, WHICH HAS SOMETHING TO SAY!
WELL, I'VE GOT SOMETHING TO SAY ALL RIGHT!
DON'T LOWER YOURSELF, DEAR BOY! LET'S GO!
WE'LL SEE HOW THAT YOUNG FELLOW GETS ON WITHOUT US!
I CAN REPLACE YOU BY THE NEXT TWO IDIOTS WHO COME MY WAY, AND WHAT'S MORE, I'LL GAIN ON THE DEAL!
HEY! YOU THERE! YOU TWO EVER DONE ANY ACTING?
WHAT, US? NO.
LIKE TO HAVE A GO?
DOES IT PAY?
HM... I SEE YOU NEVER HAVE DONE ANY ACTING... EXCELLENT! YOU WILL IMPORT A NEW ELEMENT... A BREATH OF FRESH AIR! THE VITAL THING IS, YOU MUST HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY.
PERSONALLY I'VE GOT A CAULDRON TO FILL.
MARVELLOUS! GREAT! WHAT A LINE! YOU'LL MAKE THEATRICAL HISTORY. COME WITH ME! YOU'VE GOT TALENT!
?
?
24

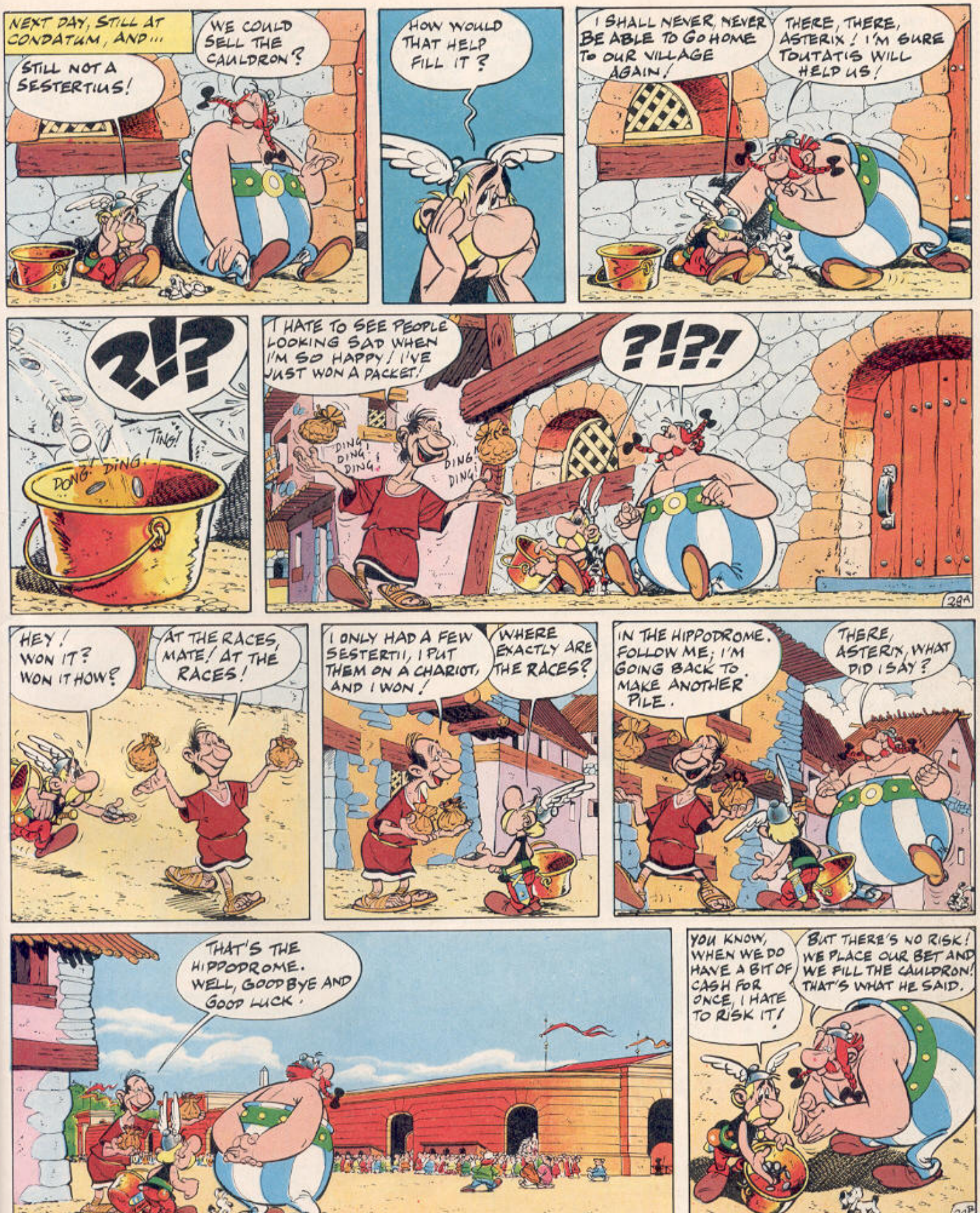

THIS IS OUR THEATRE. LET ME INTRODUCE MYSELF: MY NAME IS LAURENSOLIVIUS.
MY AIM IS TO TRANSFORM THE MODERN DRAMA! WE HAVE A MESSAGE! A MISSION! WE MUST SHOCK OUR AUDIENCES! JERK THEM OUT OF THEIR LETHARGY! IT MUST ALL BE NATURAL AND SPONTANEOUS!
NOW, LET'S GET ON WITH THE REHEARSAL! TAKE UP YOUR POSITIONS!
???
ORGIES! ORGIES! WE WANT ORGIES!
HOLD ON A MOMENT! WHERE'S OUR DISGUSTED AUDIENCE? WHERE'S ALECGUINUS GOT TO...? YOU'RE LATE, DUCKY.
JUST COMING!
RIGHT. START AGAIN.
ORGIES! WE WANT...
YOU FORGOT ONE "ORGIES," DUCKY!
SORRY! ORGIES! ORGIES! WE WANT ORGIES!
STOP! THIS IS DISGRACEFUL! THEY'RE MAKING FUN OF US!
VERY GOOD, ALECGUINUS, VERY GOOD... IT MIGHT BE AN IDEA IF YOU THREW THINGS AT HIM...
NO, IT MIGHT NOT! THAT WOULD LOOK VULGAR!

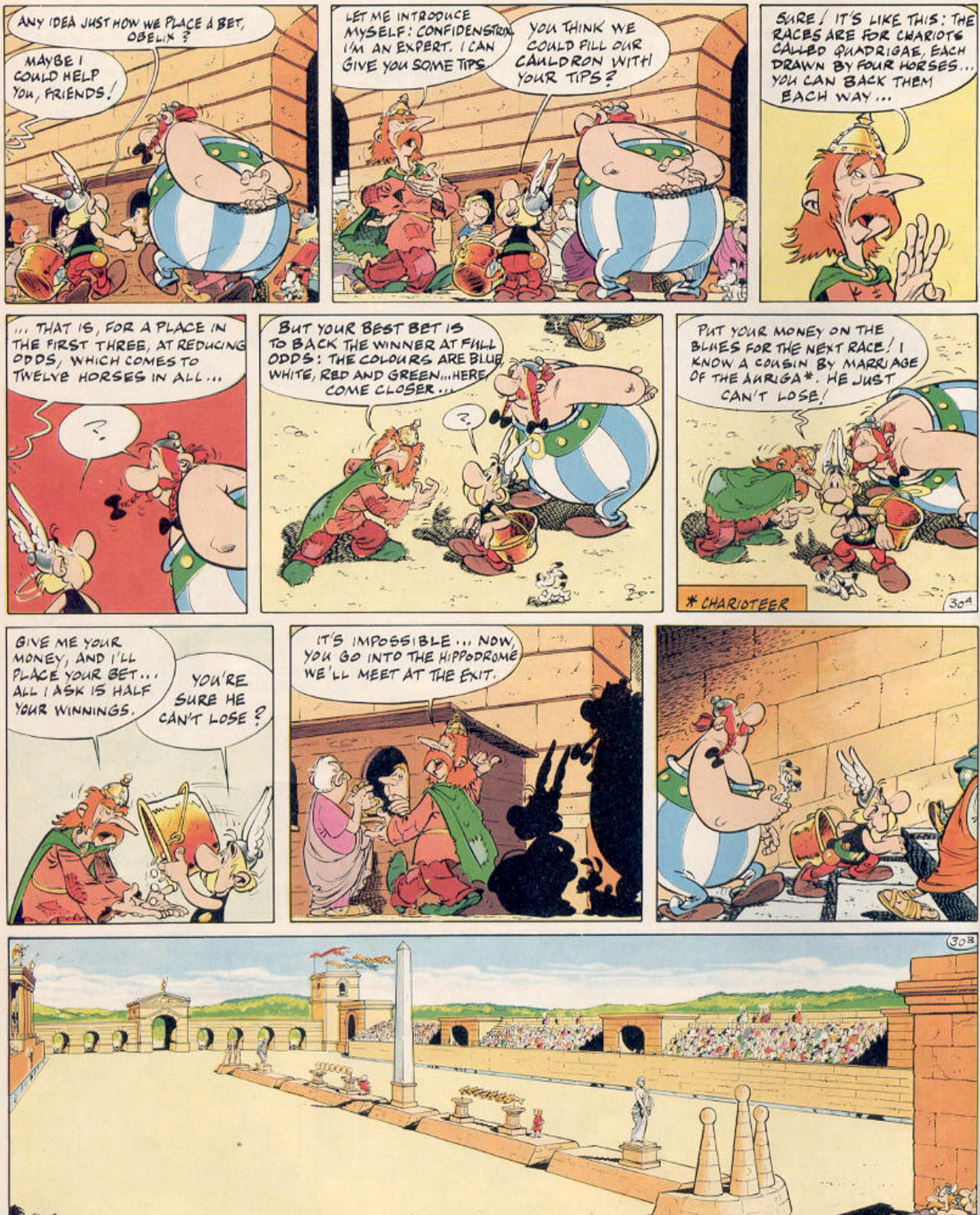

ALL RIGHT. NOW, YOU TWO WAIT UPSTAGE, KEEPING QUITE STILL...
... AND THEN I SHALL POINT AT YOU - YES, YOU, FATSO...
HIS NAME IS OBELIX.
WHOSE NAME IS OBELIX?
...AND WHEN I GIVE THE SIGN, YOU COME UP TO THE FRONT OF THE STAGE, DOING A LITTLE DANCE, AND SAY SOMETHING: ANYTHING!
ANYTHING?
YES. THAT WILL BE THE END OF THE PLAY - A SPONTANEOUS CRY FROM THE HEART! JUST SAY WHATEVER COMES INTO YOUR HEAD!
BUT SOMETIMES NOTHING COMES INTO IT!
RIGHT! SEE YOU ALL THIS EVENING! WE MUST MAKE OUR MARK! WE HAVE TO GIVE THE PUBLIC WHAT IT WANTS: A MESSAGE!
BUT WHAT AM I GOING TO SAY? WHATEVER AM I GOING TO SAY?
OH, WHAT DOES IT MATTER? OUR CAULDRON IS THE IMPORTANT THING.
SO HOW ABOUT THE MESSAGE? DON'T YOU CARE ABOUT THE MESSAGE?
!
AND THAT EVENING, THE THEATRE FILLS UP WITH THE USUAL SCINTILLATING FIRST-NIGHT AUDIENCE: THE ROMAN PREFECT, THE OFFICERS OF THE GARRISON, ALL THE LOCAL BIGWIGS, IN FACT, EVERYONE WHO IS ANYONE IN CONDATUM.
I THINK THIS SHOULD BE ENTERTAINING, O PREFECT!
I HEAR THEY'RE QUITE DISGUSTING!
UNSPEAKABLE! I HAD A LOT OF TROUBLE GETTING SEATS!


THE SHOW STARTS...
DING! DONG!
WHAT AN UGLY LOT YOU ARE! WE MAY BE UGLY TOO, BUT YOU'RE WORSE!
YAAAH!
IT'S SO DREADFULLY AUTHENTIC...!
ORGIES! ORGIES! WE WANT ORGIES!
STOP! STOP! THIS IS DISGRACEFUL! THEY'RE MAKING FUN OF US!
HE'S RIGHT!
NO, HE ISN'T!
THROW HIM OUT!
MUSEUM PIECES!
ROMAN RELICS!
THAT'S YOUR CUE! GO ON! GO ON, THEN!
I... I'LL NEVER MAKE IT!
THINK OF THE CAULDRON!

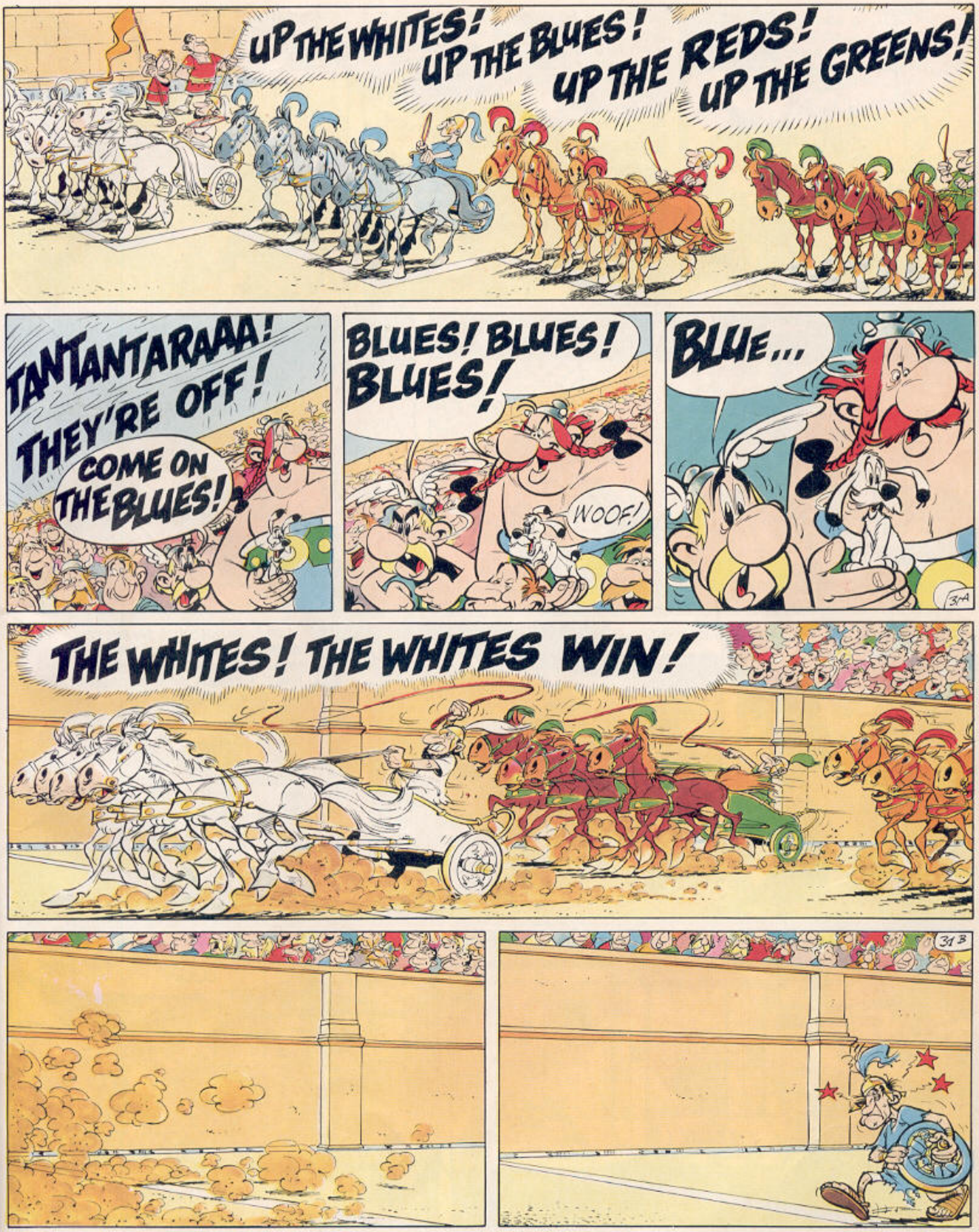


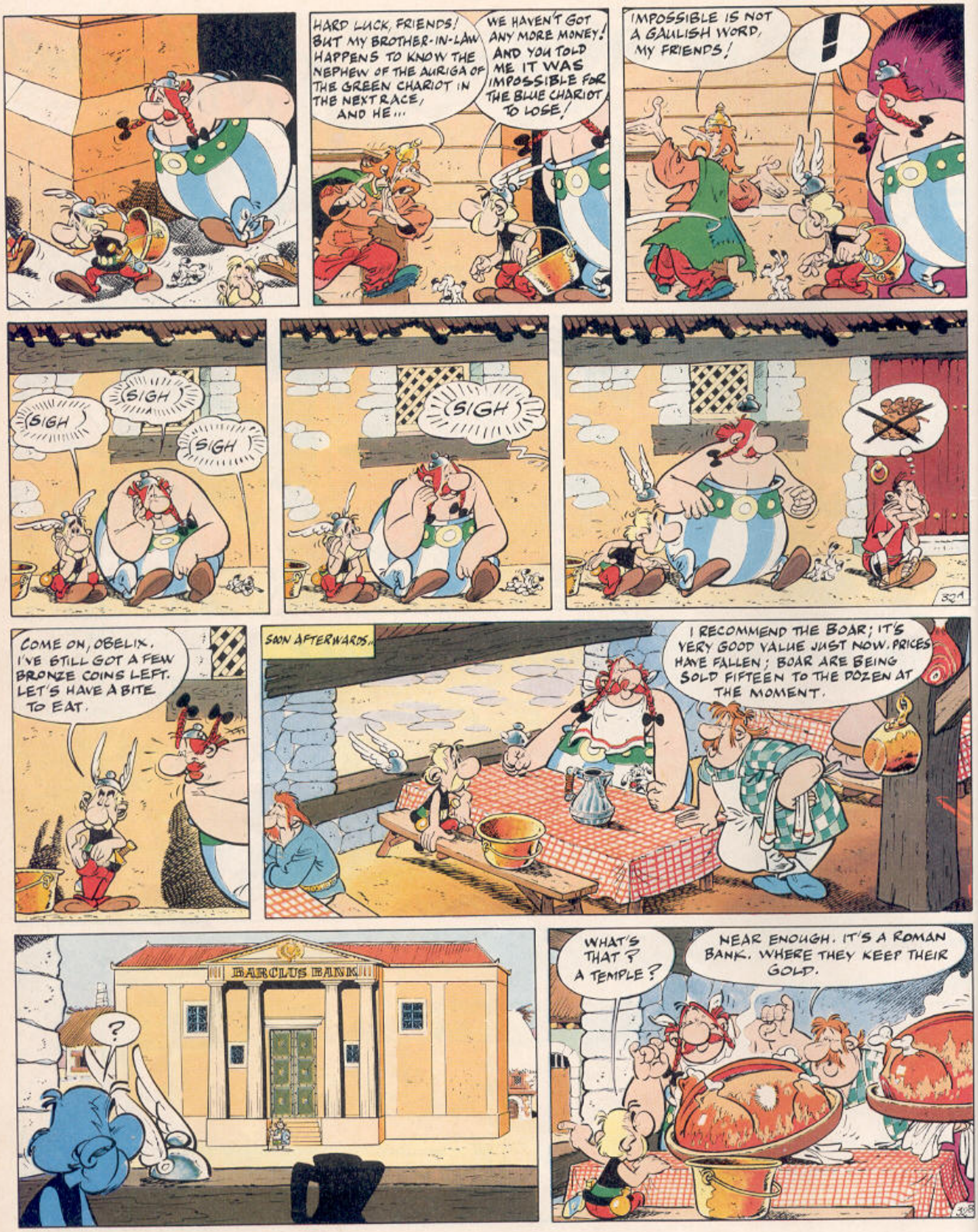
SAY SOMETHING! COME ON! ANYTHING! WHATEVER COMES INTO YOUR HEAD!
THESE ROMANS ARE CRAZY!
WHAT?
THAT'S GOING TOO FAR! ARREST THESE MORONS WHO DARE TO INSULT THE AUTHORITY OF ROME!
VERY WELL PRODUCED, THIS SHOW!
YES, IT'S GETTING GOOD!
THEY'RE OVERDOING IT A BIT NOW; THAT'S NOT VERY LIFELIKE.
OH, IT'S THE NEW DRAMATIC CONVENTION. PERSONALLY, I THINK IT'S EFFECTIVE.
COME ON! WE DON'T WANT TO HANG AROUND! THIS IS NONE OF OUR BUSINESS, WE'VE GOT BETTER THINGS TO DO.
LATER, OUTSIDE THE TOWN JAIL...
WOULD YOU LIKE US TO GET YOU OUT OF THERE?
NO FEAR! I'VE JUST BEEN BOOKED FOR THE CIRCUS AT ROME. A ONE-NIGHT STAND, OF COURSE, BUT WHAT A SHOW! LIONS, TIGERS THE WHOLE WORKS! DEAD GOOD!
BY THE WAY, FATSO- YOU OUGHT TO GO IN FOR THE THEATRE, DEAR! WHAT PERSONALITY! WHAT A GALL!

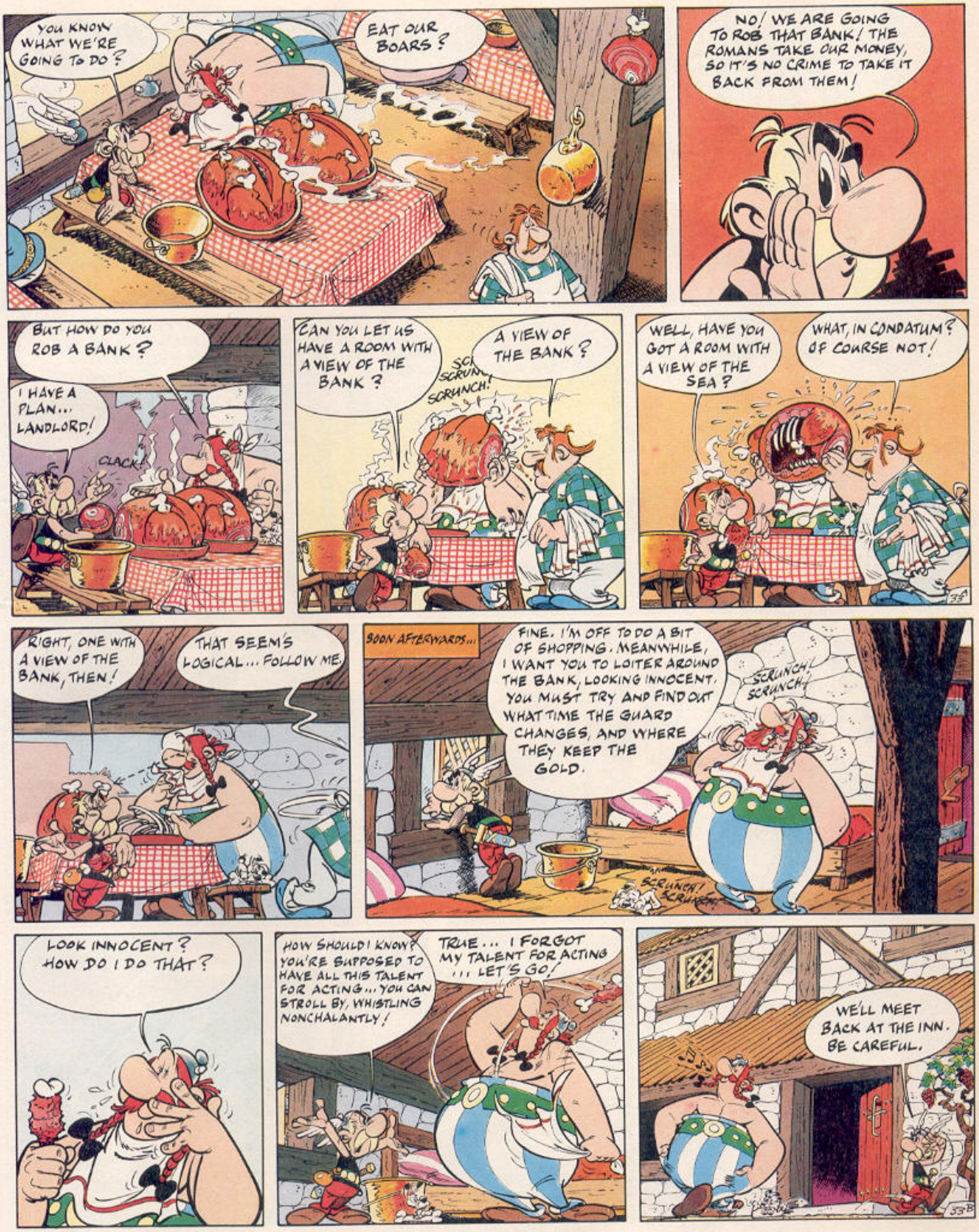

NEXT DAY, STILL AT CONDATUM, AND...
STILL NOT A SESTERTIUS!
WE COULD SELL THE CAULDRON?
HOW WOULD THAT HELP FILL IT?
I SHALL NEVER, NEVER BE ABLE TO GO HOME TO OUR VILLAGE AGAIN!
THERE, THERE, ASTERIX! I'M SURE TOUTATIS WILL HELP US!
?!?
TING!
DONG! DING!
I HATE TO SEE PEOPLE LOOKING SAD WHEN I'M SO HAPPY! I'VE JUST WON A PACKET!
DING! DING! DING!
DING! DING!
?!?!
29A
HEY! WON IT? WON IT HOW?
AT THE RACES, MATE! AT THE RACES!
I ONLY HAD A FEW SESTERTII, I PUT THEM ON A CHARIOT, AND I WON!
WHERE EXACTLY ARE THE RACES?
IN THE HIPPODROME. FOLLOW ME; I'M GOING BACK TO MAKE ANOTHER PILE.
THERE, ASTERIX, WHAT DID I SAY?
THAT'S THE HIPPODROME. WELL, GOODBYE AND GOOD LUCK.
YOU KNOW, WHEN WE DO HAVE A BIT OF CASH FOR ONCE, I HATE TO RISK IT!
BUT THERE'S NO RISK! WE PLACE OUR BET AND WE FILL THE CAULDRON! THAT'S WHAT HE SAID.
29B



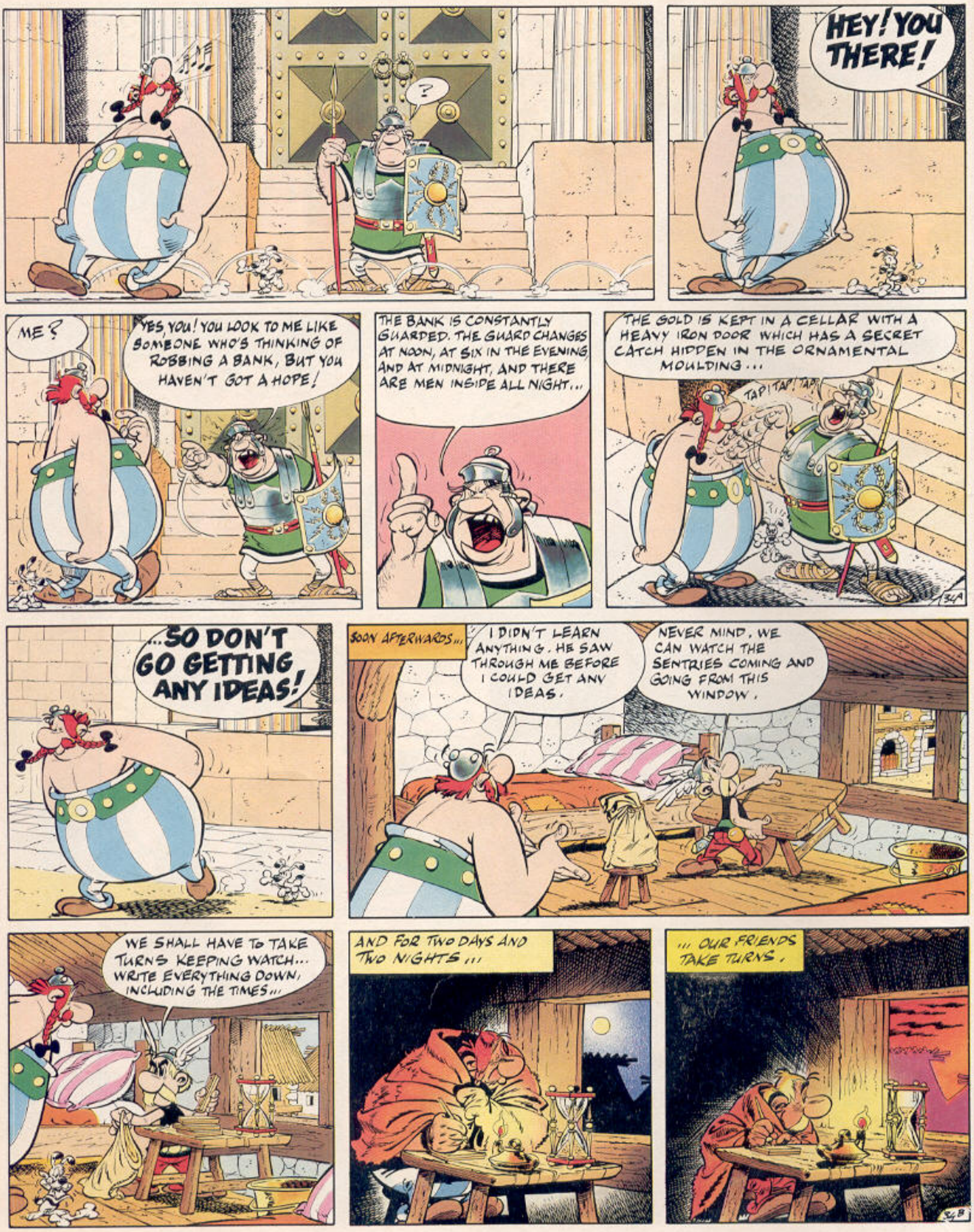
ANY IDEA JUST HOW WE PLACE A BET, OBELIX ?
MAYBE I COULD HELP YOU, FRIENDS !
LET ME INTRODUCE MYSELF: CONFIDENSTRIX. I'M AN EXPERT. I CAN GIVE YOU SOME TIPS.
YOU THINK WE COULD FILL OUR CAULDRON WITH YOUR TIPS ?
SURE ! IT'S LIKE THIS: THE RACES ARE FOR CHARIOTS CALLED QUADRIGAE, EACH DRAWN BY FOUR HORSES... YOU CAN BACK THEM EACH WAY...
... THAT IS, FOR A PLACE IN THE FIRST THREE, AT REDUCING ODDS, WHICH COMES TO TWELVE HORSES IN ALL...
?
BUT YOUR BEST BET IS TO BACK THE WINNER AT FULL ODDS: THE COLOURS ARE BLUE, WHITE, RED AND GREEN... HERE, COME CLOSER...
?
PUT YOUR MONEY ON THE BLUES FOR THE NEXT RACE ! I KNOW A COUSIN BY MARRIAGE OF THE AURIGA*. HE JUST CAN'T LOSE !
* CHARIOTEER
30A
GIVE ME YOUR MONEY, AND I'LL PLACE YOUR BET... ALL I ASK IS HALF YOUR WINNINGS.
YOU'RE SURE HE CAN'T LOSE ?
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE... NOW, YOU GO INTO THE HIPPODROME. WE'LL MEET AT THE EXIT.
30B

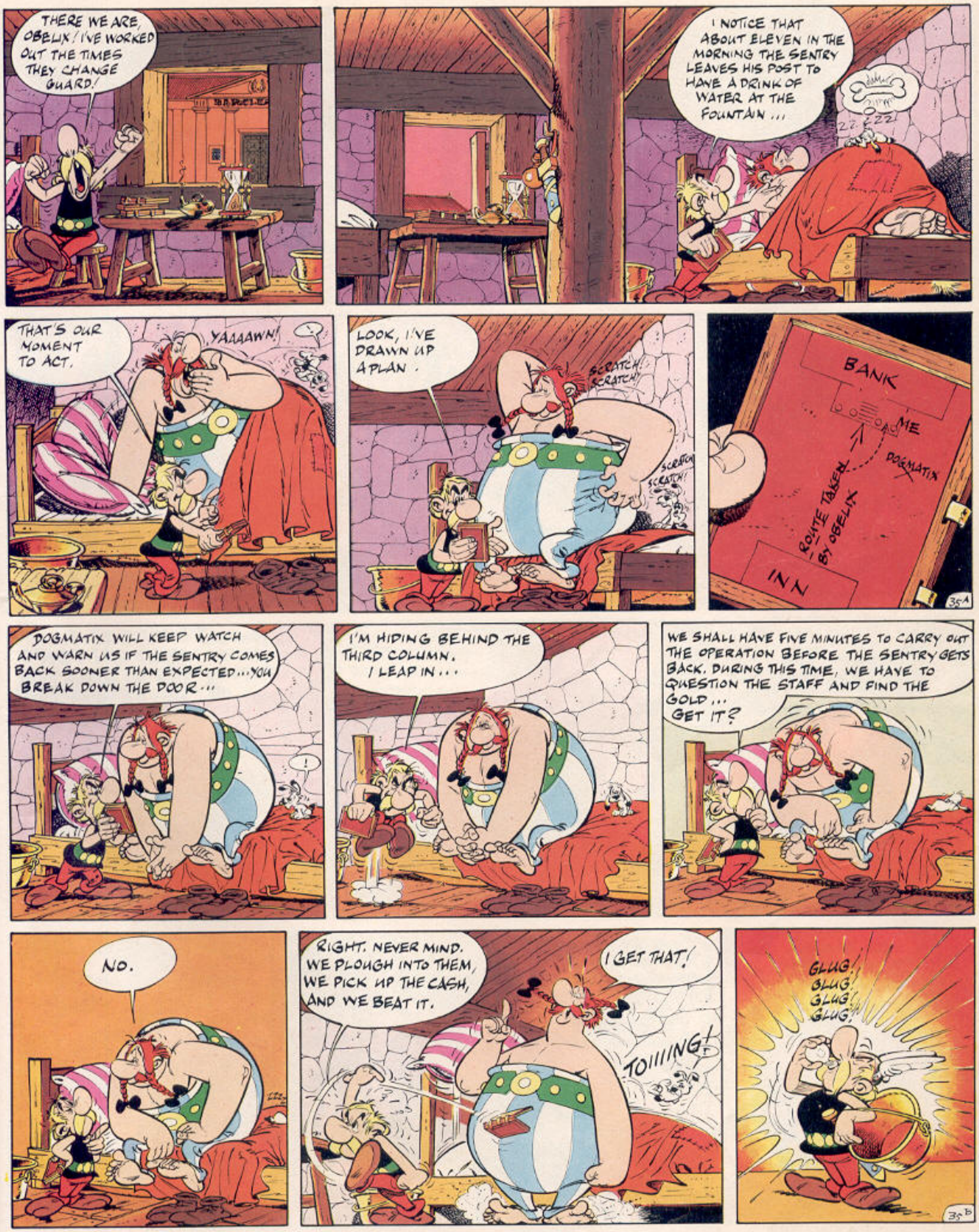

UP THE WHITES!
UP THE BLUES!
UP THE REDS!
UP THE GREENS!
TANTANTARAAA! THEY'RE OFF!
COME ON THE BLUES!
BLUES! BLUES! BLUES!
WOOF!
BLUE...
THE WHITES! THE WHITES WIN!

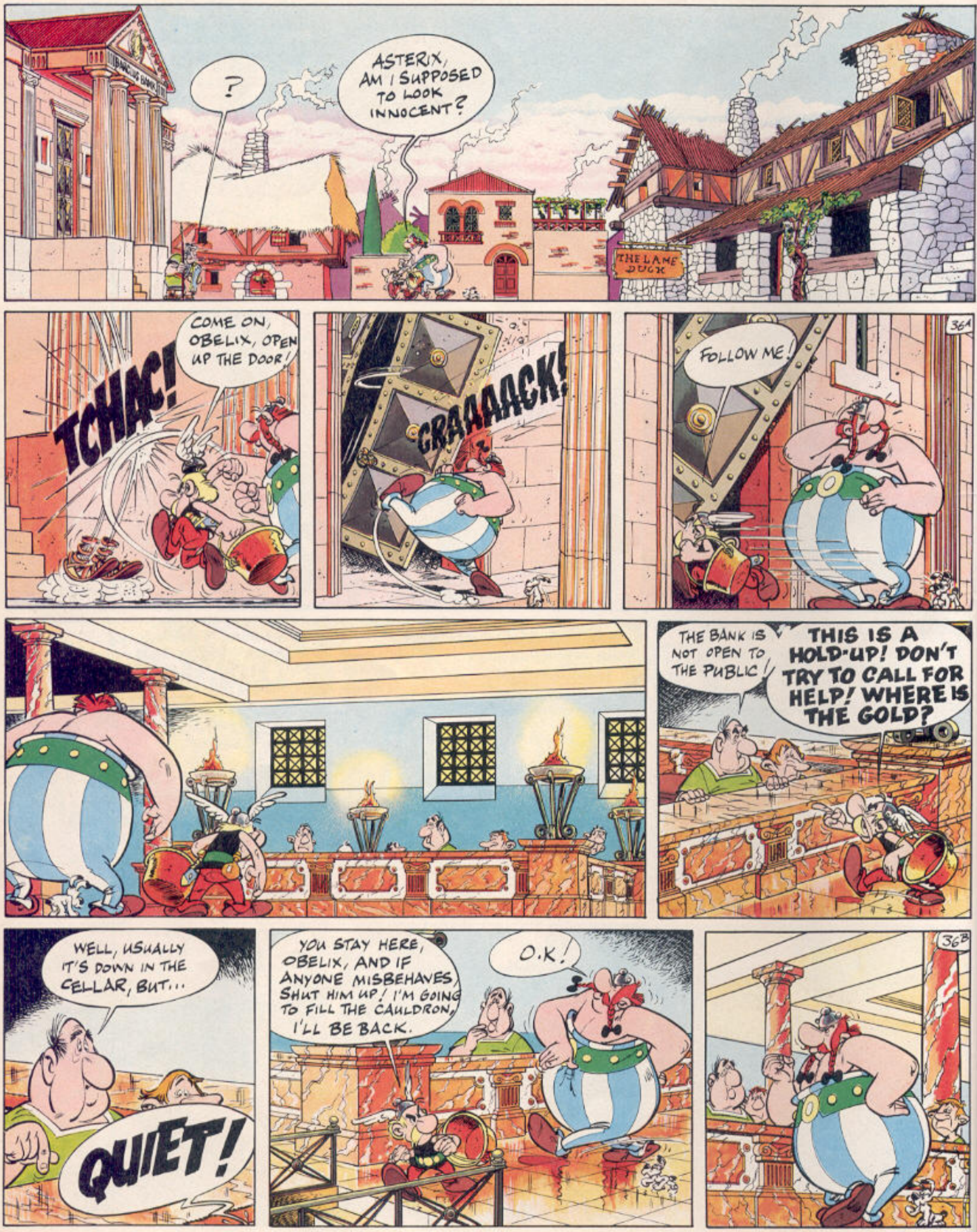

HARD LUCK, FRIENDS! BUT MY BROTHER-IN-LAW HAPPENS TO KNOW THE NEPHEW OF THE AURIGA OF THE GREEN CHARIOT IN THE NEXT RACE, AND HE...
WE HAVEN'T GOT ANY MORE MONEY! AND YOU TOLD ME IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE BLUE CHARIOT TO LOSE!
IMPOSSIBLE IS NOT A GAULISH WORD, MY FRIENDS!
!
(SIGH)
(SIGH)
(SIGH)
(SIGH)
COME ON, OBELIX. I'VE STILL GOT A FEW BRONZE COINS LEFT. LET'S HAVE A BITE TO EAT.
SOON AFTERWARDS...
I RECOMMEND THE BOAR; IT'S VERY GOOD VALUE JUST NOW. PRICES HAVE FALLEN; BOAR ARE BEING SOLD FIFTEEN TO THE DOZEN AT THE MOMENT.
BARCLUS BANK
?
WHAT'S THAT? A TEMPLE?
NEAR ENOUGH. IT'S A ROMAN BANK. WHERE THEY KEEP THEIR GOLD.



YOU KNOW WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO?
EAT OUR BOARS?
NO! WE ARE GOING TO ROB THAT BANK! THE ROMANS TAKE OUR MONEY, SO IT'S NO CRIME TO TAKE IT BACK FROM THEM!
BUT HOW DO YOU ROB A BANK?
I HAVE A PLAN... LANDLORD!
CLACK!
CAN YOU LET US HAVE A ROOM WITH A VIEW OF THE BANK?
SCRUNCH!
A VIEW OF THE BANK?
WELL, HAVE YOU GOT A ROOM WITH A VIEW OF THE SEA?
WHAT, IN CONDATUM? OF COURSE NOT!
RIGHT, ONE WITH A VIEW OF THE BANK, THEN!
THAT SEEMS LOGICAL... FOLLOW ME.
SOON AFTERWARDS...
FINE. I'M OFF TO DO A BIT OF SHOPPING. MEANWHILE, I WANT YOU TO LOITER AROUND THE BANK, LOOKING INNOCENT. YOU MUST TRY AND FIND OUT WHAT TIME THE GUARD CHANGES, AND WHERE THEY KEEP THE GOLD.
SCRUNCH! SCRUNCH!
LOOK INNOCENT? HOW DO I DO THAT?
HOW SHOULD I KNOW? YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO HAVE ALL THIS TALENT FOR ACTING... YOU CAN STROLL BY, WHISTLING NONCHALANTLY!
TRUE... I FORGOT MY TALENT FOR ACTING ... LET'S GO!
WE'LL MEET BACK AT THE INN. BE CAREFUL.

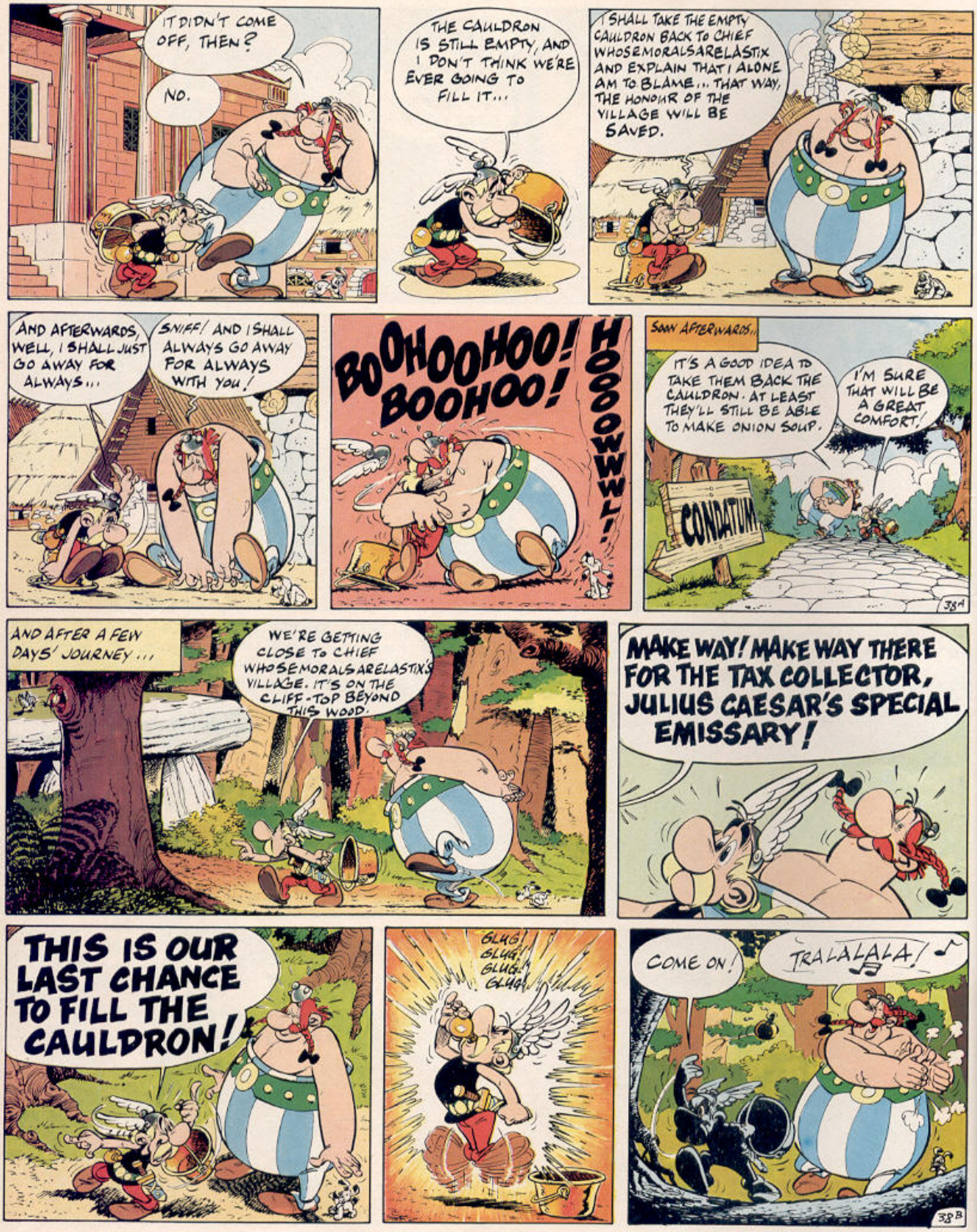

?
HEY! YOU THERE!
ME?
YES, YOU! YOU LOOK TO ME LIKE SOMEONE WHO'S THINKING OF ROBBING A BANK, BUT YOU HAVEN'T GOT A HOPE!
THE BANK IS CONSTANTLY GUARDED. THE GUARD CHANGES AT NOON, AT SIX IN THE EVENING AND AT MIDNIGHT, AND THERE ARE MEN INSIDE ALL NIGHT...
THE GOLD IS KEPT IN A CELLAR WITH A HEAVY IRON DOOR WHICH HAS A SECRET CATCH HIDDEN IN THE ORNAMENTAL MOULDING...
TAP! TAP! TAP!
34A
...SO DON'T GO GETTING ANY IDEAS!
SOON AFTERWARDS...
I DIDN'T LEARN ANYTHING. HE SAW THROUGH ME BEFORE I COULD GET ANY IDEAS.
NEVER MIND. WE CAN WATCH THE SENTRIES COMING AND GOING FROM THIS WINDOW.
WE SHALL HAVE TO TAKE TURNS KEEPING WATCH... WRITE EVERYTHING DOWN, INCLUDING THE TIMES...
AND FOR TWO DAYS AND TWO NIGHTS...
... OUR FRIENDS TAKE TURNS.
34B


THERE WE ARE, OBELIX! I'VE WORKED OUT THE TIMES THEY CHANGE GUARD!
I NOTICE THAT ABOUT ELEVEN IN THE MORNING THE SENTRY LEAVES HIS POST TO HAVE A DRINK OF WATER AT THE FOUNTAIN ...
THAT'S OUR MOMENT TO ACT.
YAAAAWN!
LOOK, I'VE DRAWN UP A PLAN.
SCRATCH! SCRATCH!
SCRATCH! SCRATCH!
BANK
ME
DOGMATIX
ROUTE TAKEN BY OBELIX
INN
DOGMATIX WILL KEEP WATCH AND WARN US IF THE SENTRY COMES BACK SOONER THAN EXPECTED...YOU BREAK DOWN THE DOOR...
!
I'M HIDING BEHIND THE THIRD COLUMN. I LEAP IN...
WE SHALL HAVE FIVE MINUTES TO CARRY OUT THE OPERATION BEFORE THE SENTRY GETS BACK. DURING THIS TIME, WE HAVE TO QUESTION THE STAFF AND FIND THE GOLD... GET IT?
NO.
RIGHT. NEVER MIND. WE PLOUGH INTO THEM, WE PICK UP THE CASH, AND WE BEAT IT.
I GET THAT!
TOIIIING!
GLUG! GLUG! GLUG! GLUG!

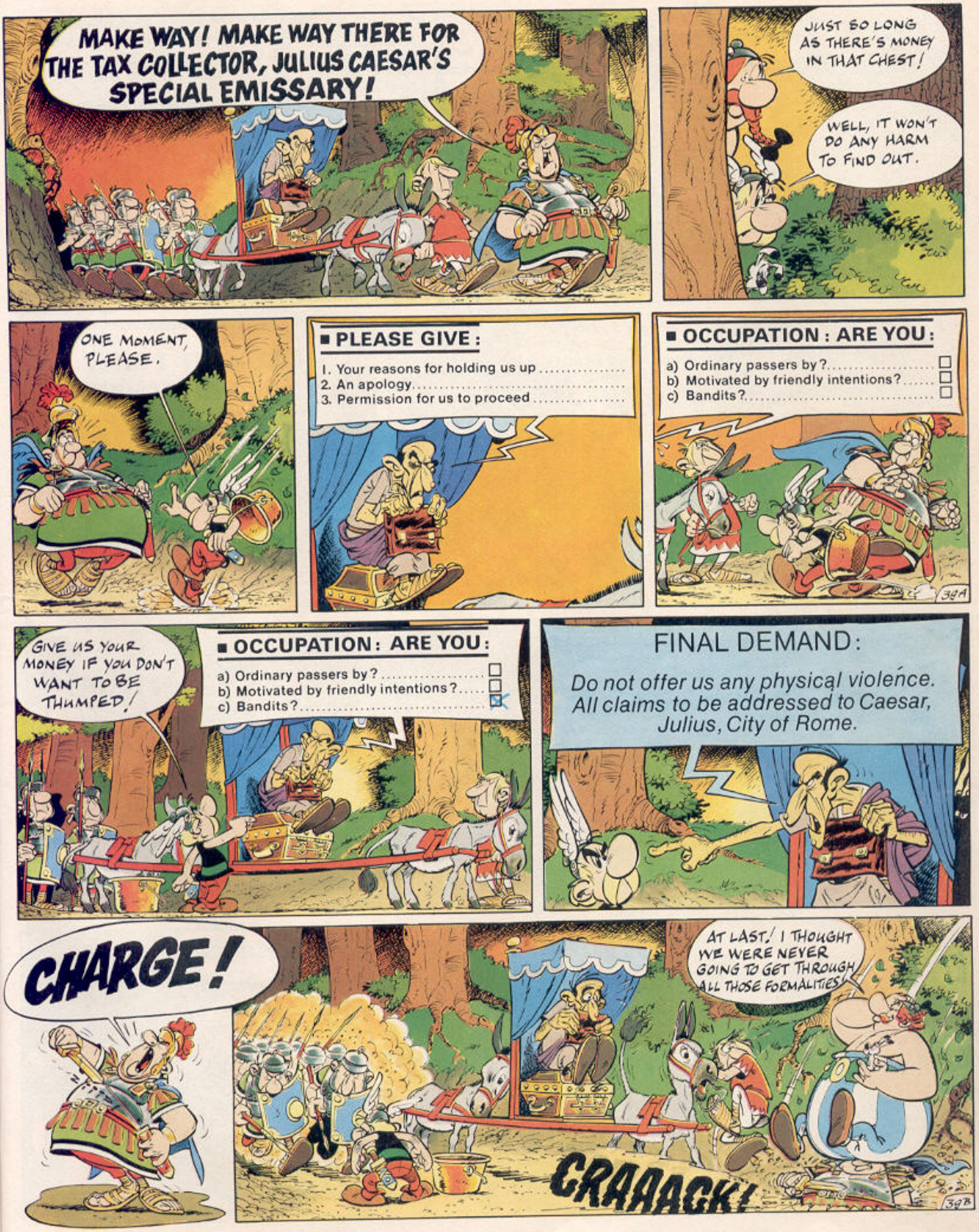


?
ASTERIX, AM I SUPPOSED TO LOOK INNOCENT?
THE LAME DUCK
COME ON, OBELIX, OPEN UP THE DOOR!
TCHAC!
CRAAAACK!
FOLLOW ME!
THE BANK IS NOT OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!
THIS IS A HOLD-UP! DON'T TRY TO CALL FOR HELP! WHERE IS THE GOLD?
WELL, USUALLY IT'S DOWN IN THE CELLAR, BUT...
QUIET!
YOU STAY HERE, OBELIX, AND IF ANYONE MISBEHAVES, SHUT HIM UP! I'M GOING TO FILL THE CAULDRON, I'LL BE BACK.
O.K!

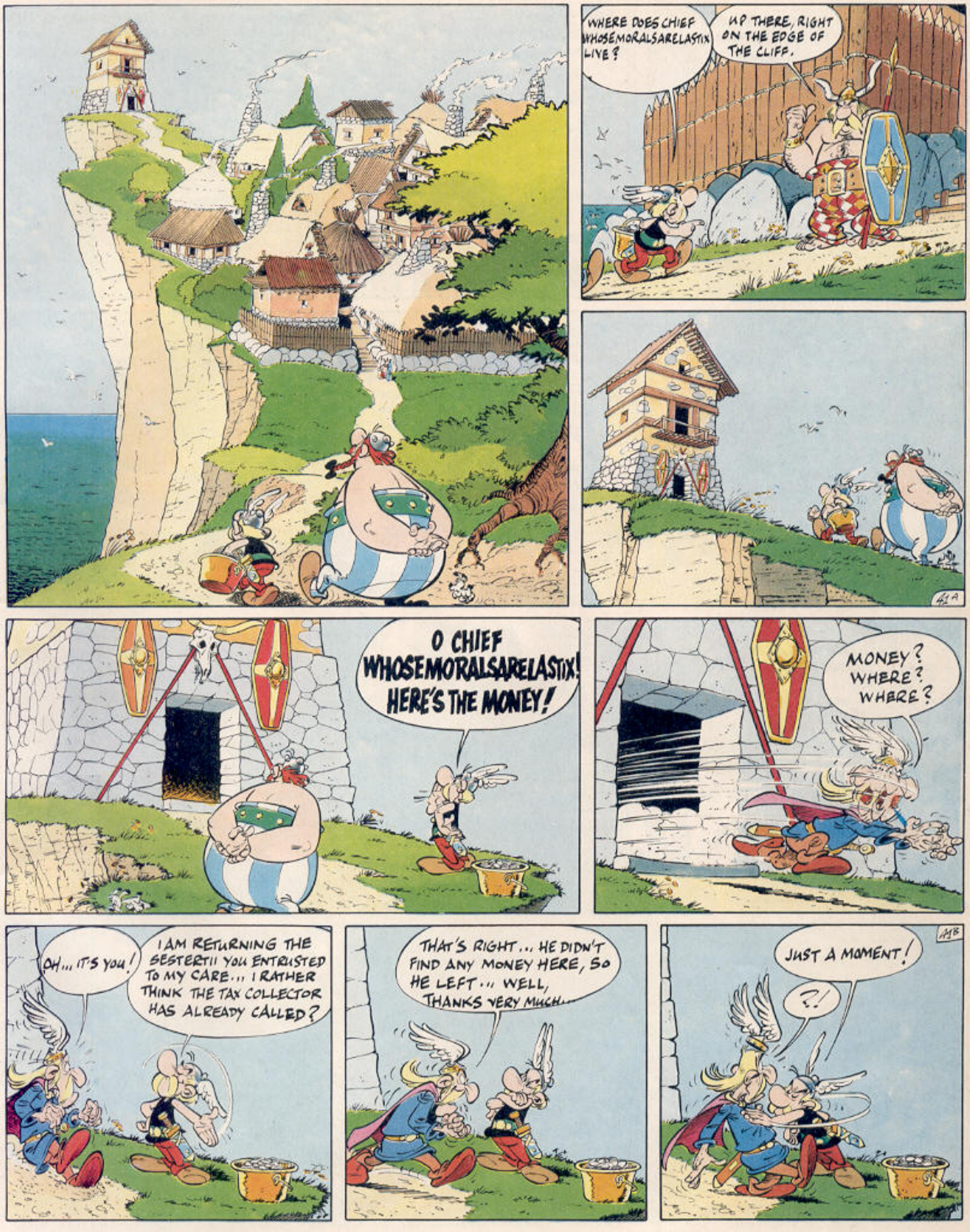

THIS DOOR WILL NEVER STAND UP TO THE MAGIC POTION...
BANG!
OH!
HEY, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? IF YOU WANT TO DEPOSIT MONEY, YOU HAVE TO DO IT AT THE COUNTER UPSTAIRS.
I DIDN'T COME TO DEPOSIT MONEY, I CAME TO TAKE SOME.
BANG!
OH, I THOUGHT IT WAS A BIT STRANGE!
BUT WE DON'T HAVE ANY MONEY LEFT, MY POOR FELLOW! NOT A SESTERTIUS! THAT'S WHY CAESAR LEVIES TAXES... QUID PRO QUO, OLD CHAP. AT LEAST, PLENTY OF QUID PRO CAESAR, BUT PRECIOUS LITTLE FOR ANYONE ELSE. OH, CAESAR'S A REAL OLD PRO!
COME ALONG, OBELIX!
AND STOP THAT WHISTLING!
O.K.

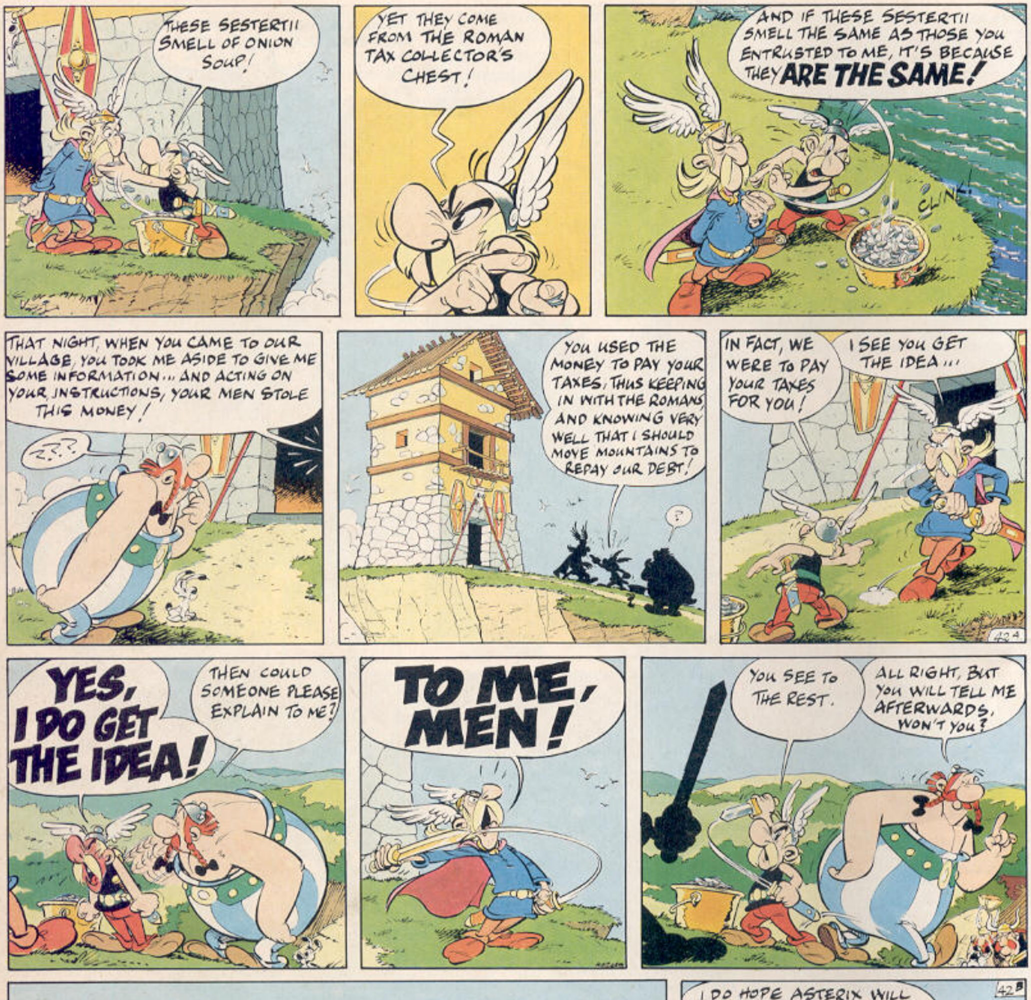


IT DIDN'T COME OFF, THEN?
NO.
THE CAULDRON IS STILL EMPTY, AND I DON'T THINK WE'RE EVER GOING TO FILL IT...
I SHALL TAKE THE EMPTY CAULDRON BACK TO CHIEF WHOSEMORALSARELASTIX AND EXPLAIN THAT I ALONE AM TO BLAME... THAT WAY, THE HONOUR OF THE VILLAGE WILL BE SAVED.
AND AFTERWARDS, WELL, I SHALL JUST GO AWAY FOR ALWAYS...
SNIFF! AND I SHALL ALWAYS GO AWAY FOR ALWAYS WITH YOU!
BOOHOOHOO! BOOHOO!
HOOOOOWWWL!
SOON AFTERWARDS...
IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO TAKE THEM BACK THE CAULDRON. AT LEAST THEY'LL STILL BE ABLE TO MAKE ONION SOUP.
I'M SURE THAT WILL BE A GREAT COMFORT!
CONDATUM
38A
AND AFTER A FEW DAYS' JOURNEY...
WE'RE GETTING CLOSE TO CHIEF WHOSEMORALSARELASTIX'S VILLAGE. IT'S ON THE CLIFF-TOP BEYOND THIS WOOD.
MAKE WAY! MAKE WAY THERE FOR THE TAX COLLECTOR, JULIUS CAESAR'S SPECIAL EMISSARY!
THIS IS OUR LAST CHANCE TO FILL THE CAULDRON!
GLUG! GLUG! GLUG! GLUG!
COME ON!
TRALALALA!
38B

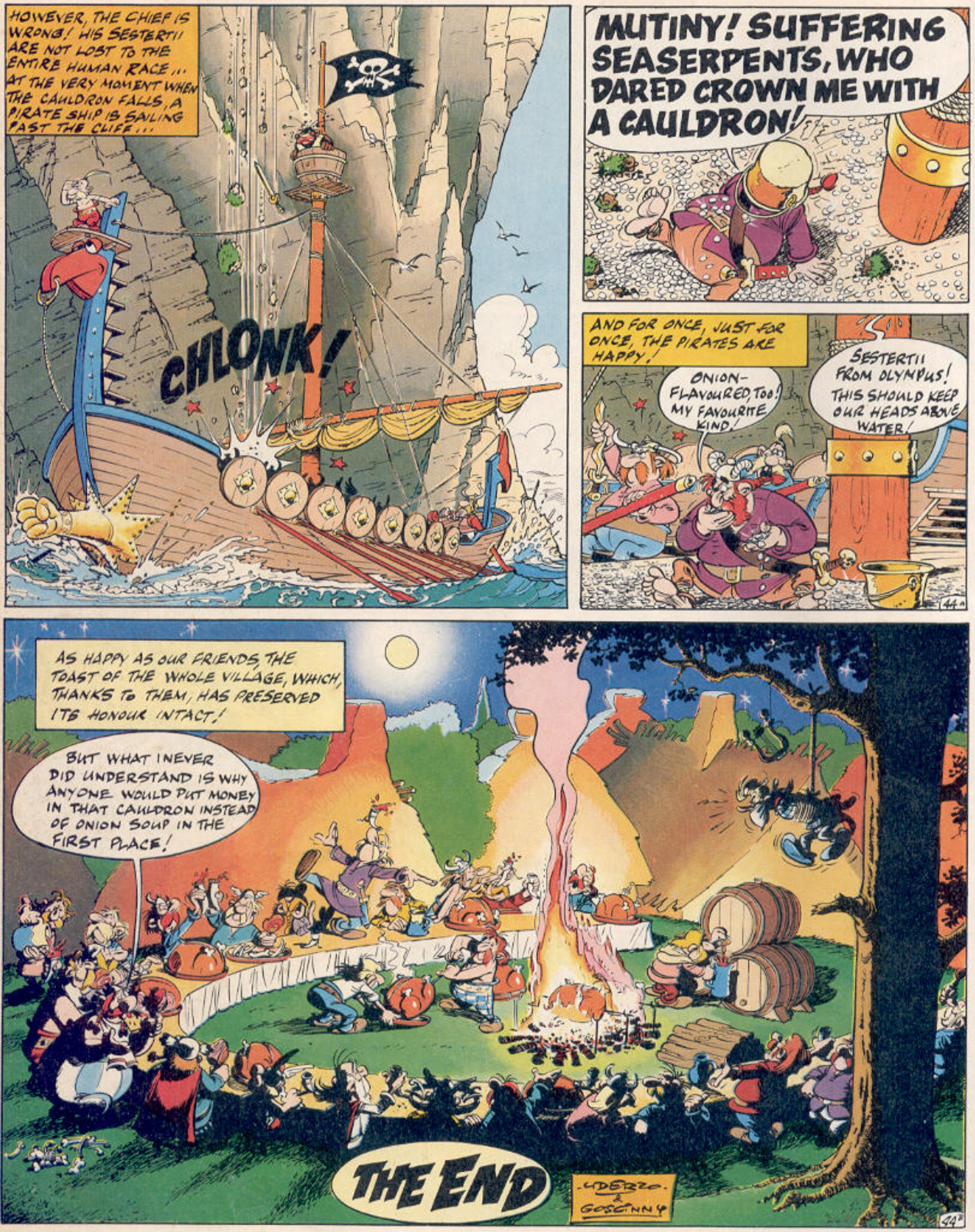

MAKE WAY! MAKE WAY THERE FOR THE TAX COLLECTOR, JULIUS CAESAR'S SPECIAL EMISSARY!
JUST SO LONG AS THERE'S MONEY IN THAT CHEST!
WELL, IT WON'T DO ANY HARM TO FIND OUT.
ONE MOMENT, PLEASE.
PLEASE GIVE:
1. Your reasons for holding us up ....
2. An apology.......................................
3. Permission for us to proceed ....
OCCUPATION : ARE YOU:
a) Ordinary passers by?..................
b) Motivated by friendly intentions?......
c) Bandits?..................................
39A
GIVE US YOUR MONEY IF YOU DON'T WANT TO BE THUMPED!
OCCUPATION: ARE YOU:
a) Ordinary passers by?..................
b) Motivated by friendly intentions?......
c) Bandits?..................................
FINAL DEMAND:
Do not offer us any physical violence. All claims to be addressed to Caesar, Julius, City of Rome.
CHARGE!
AT LAST! I THOUGHT WE WERE NEVER GOING TO GET THROUGH ALL THOSE FORMALITIES!
CRAAACK!
39B


A FEW BRUISES LATER ...
HAS EVERYONE BEEN DONE?
NOW THEN, HAND OVER YOUR MONEY!
You will be taxed on the sum of which you are about to take possession
I WANT TO FILL MY CAULDRON. IF THERE'S ANY MONEY LEFT OVER YOU CAN HAVE A TAX RETURN.
Your instalment on account will be deductible from the sum finally due.
AWFULLY SORRY... IT'S EXACTLY THE AMOUNT WE NEED... COMING, OBELIX?
40A
A RECEIPT! I WANT A SIGNED RECEIPT!
WE'LL TAKE CHIEF WHOSEMORALSARELASTIX THIS MONEY, AND I SHALL BE ABLE TO GO HOME TO OUR VILLAGE MY HEAD HELD HIGH!
WAIT A MINUTE...?
SNIFF! SNIFF! SNIFF!
SMELL THAT!
BUT MONEY HAS NO SMELL!
SNIFF! SNIFF! SNIFF! SNIFF!
40B
SMELLS GOOD!
EXTREMELY GOOD! COME ON, OBELIX!


WHERE DOES CHIEF WHOSEMORALSARELASTIX LIVE?
UP THERE, RIGHT ON THE EDGE OF THE CLIFF.
O CHIEF WHOSEMORALSARELASTIX! HERE'S THE MONEY!
MONEY? WHERE? WHERE?
OH... IT'S YOU!
I AM RETURNING THE SESTERTII YOU ENTRUSTED TO MY CARE... I RATHER THINK THE TAX COLLECTOR HAS ALREADY CALLED?
THAT'S RIGHT... HE DIDN'T FIND ANY MONEY HERE, SO HE LEFT... WELL, THANKS VERY MUCH...
JUST A MOMENT!
?!


THESE SESTERTII SMELL OF ONION SOUP!
YET THEY COME FROM THE ROMAN TAX COLLECTOR'S CHEST!
AND IF THESE SESTERTII SMELL THE SAME AS THOSE YOU ENTRUSTED TO ME, IT'S BECAUSE THEY ARE THE SAME!
CLINK!
THAT NIGHT, WHEN YOU CAME TO OUR VILLAGE, YOU TOOK ME ASIDE TO GIVE ME SOME INFORMATION... AND ACTING ON YOUR INSTRUCTIONS, YOUR MEN STOLE THIS MONEY!
?!?
YOU USED THE MONEY TO PAY YOUR TAXES, THUS KEEPING IN WITH THE ROMANS AND KNOWING VERY WELL THAT I SHOULD MOVE MOUNTAINS TO REPAY OUR DEBT!
?
IN FACT, WE WERE TO PAY YOUR TAXES FOR YOU!
I SEE YOU GET THE IDEA...
YES, I DO GET THE IDEA!
THEN COULD SOMEONE PLEASE EXPLAIN TO ME?
TO ME, MEN!
YOU SEE TO THE REST.
ALL RIGHT, BUT YOU WILL TELL ME AFTERWARDS, WON'T YOU?
WOOF!
I DO HOPE ASTERIX WILL EXPLAIN. I GENERALLY LIKE TO KNOW WHY WE'RE FIGHTING.
PAF!
WOOF! WOOF!


WAIT A MINUTE! NO FIGHTING BETWEEN BROTHERS, RIGHT...?
TCHAC!
PARTICULARLY IF SOME BROTHERS ARE STRONGER THAN OTHER BROTHERS!
TING!
TCHIC!
TCHAC!
TING!
DZIMMM!
43A
AHA! AND NOW TO SETTLE OUR ACCOUNT, BY BELENOS!
!
MY SESTERTII! MY SESTERTII!
THAT SEEMS TO BE THAT. WE'VE SETTLED OUR DEBT, YOU'VE BEEN PUNISHED FOR YOUR AVARICE, AND MAY IT BE A LESSON TO YOU.
MY SESTERTII! THEY'RE NO GOOD TO ANYONE NOW!
SOBS
COME ON, OBELIX. LET'S GO HOME.
CRACK!
43B


HOWEVER, THE CHIEF IS WRONG! HIS SESTERTII ARE NOT LOST TO THE ENTIRE HUMAN RACE... AT THE VERY MOMENT WHEN THE CAULDRON FALLS, A PIRATE SHIP IS SAILING PAST THE CLIFF...
CHLONK!
MUTINY! SUFFERING SEASERPENTS, WHO DARED CROWN ME WITH A CAULDRON!
AND FOR ONCE, JUST FOR ONCE, THE PIRATES ARE HAPPY!
ONION-FLAVOURED, TOO! MY FAVOURITE KIND!
SESTERTII FROM OLYMPUS! THIS SHOULD KEEP OUR HEADS ABOVE WATER!
44A
AS HAPPY AS OUR FRIENDS, THE TOAST OF THE WHOLE VILLAGE, WHICH, THANKS TO THEM, HAS PRESERVED ITS HONOUR INTACT!
BUT WHAT I NEVER DID UNDERSTAND IS WHY ANYONE WOULD PUT MONEY IN THAT CAULDRON INSTEAD OF ONION SOUP IN THE FIRST PLACE!
THE END
UDERZO & GOSCINNY
44B

proost